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WRITING STRATEGIES IN SPANISH OR FRENCH AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL: A COMPARISON OF PROFICIENT SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS IDENTIFIED AS ACADEMICALLY GIFTED WITH THOSE NOT SO IDENTIFIED

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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1983

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To the memory of Dorothy T. Towle,
without whom this would not have been possible
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I say with all the love in the world, "Thanks! And now, it's your
turn!"
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The question of how one learns a foreign language is one that educators and psychologists have been pondering for a long time. The answer is much more complex than the solutions usually offered, such as taking an intensive course, or immersing oneself in the culture of the people who speak the language one wants to learn. The fact is that many have tried to learn foreign languages by means of the above methods and countless others, and have failed to meet their objectives. Others, however, perhaps sitting next to them in class or sharing a pension with them, did succeed in learning the target language. Why did these "others" succeed where the first group failed?

Here are three answers that an unsuccessful language learner might give to this question:

"S/He is a good student."

"S/He is gifted."

"S/He has a talent for learning languages."

Foreign language educators, in taking a mental inventory of the students who have passed through their classes over the years, can divide all of their students into three groups. Setting aside the
first group—students who make little or no effort to learn—two
groups of language learners can be isolated: Those who make an
effort and succeed in learning, and those who make an effort, but do
not emerge with any definitive grasp of the foreign language. The
members of the latter group may fall into the category of "average"
students, but an uncomfortably large number of them are students who
are doing well in other subjects. They may score high on achievement
tests and other types of standardized tests administered to groups of
students to determine their progress in school. Conversely, a number
of the successful language learners may be only average students in
other classes, and may score barely at grade level on achievement
tests. The argument "S/He is a good student", then, does not always
prove to be true. Being a good student also implies working hard at
a course. Unsuccessful language learners often work very hard at
trying to learn a language, but still are not able to do so.

It is necessary to look more deeply into the second response:
"S/He is gifted." It is difficult to determine what the unsuccessful
language learner has in mind when s/he uses the term "gifted."
Before 1940, students were identified as gifted by means of IQ scores
alone. In 1940, Witty redefined the gifted child as one "whose
performance is consistently remarkable in any potentially valuable
area (Clark, 1979, p. 5)". The following definition is the one used
in federal legislation:

Gifted and talented children means children, and
whenever applicable, youth, who are identified at the
preschool, elementary, or secondary level as possessing
demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence
of high performance capability in areas such as
intellectual, creative, specific academic, or
leadership ability, or in the performing and visual arts, and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school. (Congressional Record, 1978).

This is a broad definition, encompassing both the gifted and the talented. It is a very significant one for gifted students in the United States, since it sanctions the development of special programs for gifted students in the schools.

"Giftedness" had been thought to encompass all areas of endeavor. Both of the definitions cited above indicate that giftedness, instead, may appear in one or possibly more than one area. The unsuccessful language learner's third response, "S/He has a talent for learning languages," might come closer to the mark.

Clark (1979) points out that gifted students, like all students, have individual interests, and that their abilities are likely to be in different areas. An on-going program that identifies students gifted in mathematics is the SAMPY (Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth) Program at Johns Hopkins University. Julian Stanley, developer of the program, asserts that the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) is more relevant than IQ tests for identifying mathematically able youth for accelerated programs. He states that some students reason mathematically far better than others of exactly the same chronological age. This fact may account for poor performance in mathematics classes by students who have tested high on IQ tests (Stanley, 1979).

If the objective is to select students who are good language learners for an accelerated program, one may use a foreign language
aptitude test for such identification. An accelerated program implies a rapid learning rate, and Carroll's definition of aptitude is "how long the learner takes to learn a given amount of material (Chastain, 1976, p. 201)." The MLAT (Modern Language Aptitude Test), developed by Carroll and Sapon, 1958, measures the speed with which one learns a language. The other language aptitude test available to the public is the PLAB (Plimsleur Language Aptitude Battery), 1963. The test battery includes the following sections:

1. Overall grade point average
2. Interest
3. Vocabulary
4. Language analysis
5. Sound discrimination
6. Sound-symbol

(Bartz, 1977)

The PLAB considers more than learning rate, and its use has been validated by Bartz. If a school system were trying to set up a program in foreign language study, and wished to ensure that the students who entered the program would have the best possible chance of succeeding, administering either of the aptitude tests would be helpful in selecting participants for the program. Such testing would hardly be practical for placing students in a regular program, however, and most foreign language educators (not to mention parents and students) would object to a process that might force students to study a language because they had made a high score on a test, or
exclude students from a language program because they had made a low one.

The objective of most programs is not to exclude students; rather, it is to try to meet the needs of all the students who are in it. That objective implies the identification of students who are especially well-suited to foreign language learning, and ensuring their being included in programs to meet their needs. There is particular interest in providing for the gifted student, as s/he will likely be among the leaders in the world. The National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Language has expressed a strong desire that these students be involved in foreign language programs (National Council, 1982).

What is known about good, or gifted, foreign language learners? Is there a relationship between being identified as gifted, and being "good at learning foreign languages"? Several research studies have been conducted for the purpose of finding out more about the good language learner.

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education conducted a study beginning in 1974 to inquire into the nature of the good language learner. The researchers had two principal concerns: (1) the strategies and techniques the learner consciously develops and employs, and (2) other certain learner characteristics, in particular personality and cognitive style factors, which are likely to influence the use of strategies and techniques and thereby, indirectly, learning outcome. As a result of the study they were
able to identify strategies and techniques that good language learners apply (Nalman, et al, 1978).

Carlson (1981) identified some characteristics of students who are gifted and talented foreign language learners. From the results of a survey she established three preliminary lists of characteristics of good students of French, German, and Spanish. The characteristics were then ranked by a group of selected professionals who had been identified as knowledgeable in the field of gifted and talented in foreign language education. Carlson identified a total of 47 characteristics, several examples of which follow:

1. The student reads the target language for ideas rather than words;
2. The student uses what has previously been learned in the classroom;
3. The student quickly grasps new concepts involving any of the four skills of the target language.
   (Carlson, 1981)

The National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages published a position paper (1982) that stated four areas in which gifted students display specific traits which consequently require specific needs to be satisfied in the foreign language program, or in a foreign language program for gifted students. The general traits are:

1. Language traits: highly verbal, advanced vocabulary; reads several years above grade level; superior communication skills; ability to manipulate language creatively.
2. Conceptualized traits: keen insights into cause and effect relationships; highly observant; rapid mastery of the easy recall of facts; creative manipulation of symbols.
3. Socialization traits: outgoing and friendly; assumes leadership roles; well-developed sense of humor; openness to others.

4. Productivity traits: high physical and intellectual level; self-motivated to learn; high standards and goals; prolonged attention span.

(National Council, 1982)

Included in the paper is a list of the characteristics of good language learners identified in the previously mentioned study by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. The position paper cites eleven characteristics:

1. Field Independence
2. Ambiguity tolerance
3. Balanced generalization
4. Extroversion
5. Good language learners know something about their learning style.
6. Feel comfortable taking risks.
7. Seek arenas in which to use the target language.
8. Excellent guessers
9. Pay attention to form as well as meaning.
10. Quickly adjust to the new target language as early as possible.
11. Marked degree of empathy

(National Council, 1982)

Reference has already been made to the SMPY program at Johns Hopkins University. A newer program more closely related to this study is the PVGY (Program for Verbally Gifted Youth) begun in 1978. The program is designed to help develop writing skills in the native
language. The PVGY program, like the SMPY, identifies the participants by means of the SAT, along with the Test of Standard Written English (TSWE). One of the components of the program is a course in German, offered to students who scored high on the verbal aptitude portion of the SAT (SAT-V). The instructor of the German course notes that "even as gifted youngsters they did not constitute a homogeneous group. They manifested different degrees of ability in imitating German sounds, in grasping points of grammar, and in retaining learned material (McClain, 1980)."

Returning to the original question of why some students succeed in learning languages while other students fail to do so, we have been looking at a variety of answers, or attempts at answers, from research. The quality of giftedness appears to be more specific than general. The ability to learn a language seems to require more than general intelligence, and something more specific than tested high verbal ability.

Stern (1975) has stated that good language learners have a personal learning style or positive learning strategies, technical know-how about how to tackle a foreign language, and strategies of experimentation and planning with the object of developing the new language into an ordered system which they are progressively revising. Stern's assumptions were borne out by the results of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education project, 1975.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to discover some of the specific strategies successful language learners are using to complete a specific learning task. It is also the purpose of the study to determine whether or not there is a difference between strategies used by good language learners who have been identified as gifted, and by good language learners who have not been so identified.

In trying to discover students' learning strategies, the researchers of the Ontario Institute project concluded that strict observation in language learning classrooms does not reveal language learning strategies or specific techniques other than fairly obvious indicators. They found, instead, that interviews with students about their language learning experiences made it possible to identify and describe some strategies and techniques (Naiman, et al., 1978).

This technique was used by Hosenfeld (1977). She interviewed students who were studying a foreign language to try to find out what they were doing to perform a particular learning task. She found that students of junior-high age, and college students, are able to talk about their strategies and operations as they perform at least some of the tasks given them in the classroom (Hosenfeld, 1976).

A "thinking aloud" process was used in a study to determine how students learned new vocabulary. Van Daalen-Kapteijns and Elshout-Mohr (1981) wanted to find out whether students identified as high or low in verbal comprehension used different learning strategies when learning new words. The researchers presented the
subjects with artificial words in context and asked them to think aloud as they went about determining the meanings of the "words."

This researcher proposes to study good language learners with the objective of determining what strategies they are using when they write a composition in the target language. The researcher will show the students a picture and ask them to write a short composition based on it. The students will be asked to "think aloud" as they compose. The responses will be recorded so that they may be reviewed and analyzed after the interview has been completed. The success of this technique in similar studies has encouraged this researcher to believe that it is the most effective one for conducting this type of study.

Value of the Study

Research indicates that educators need to know more about the strategies students employ to complete specific learning tasks. Hosenfeld discovered that what the teacher perceives as the way students learn and what the student actually does are often very different. The results of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge about learning strategies.

The students who participate in the study will be proficient second language learners. Some of these proficient learners will have been identified as gifted by whatever criteria that are accepted by their respective school systems. This researcher believes that the resulting composition and the students' verbal commentary produced while writing it will reveal interesting and valuable
Information about the strategies good language learners use in writing compositions in the target language. The strategies being studied will be those of successful language learners. The results of the study may bring foreign language educators closer to finding out successful strategies and techniques in language learning that may be taught to less proficient second language learners.

Finally, the results of this study will be valuable to administrators of programs for the gifted, and for teachers in those programs. The practice of identifying gifted students by means of IQ tests alone has changed. There is also a movement away from identification of students as "generally gifted," and a trend toward identification of gifted in more specific areas. Some research has been done toward identifying gifted language learners. This study will contribute information about specific learning strategies used by good language learners, and by gifted students who are good language learners. This information may be helpful in identifying gifted second language learners.

The following research questions will be attended to in this study:

1. What strategies will a proficient second language learner employ in writing a composition based on a picture shown him/her by the researcher?

2. In completing the above task, will there be differences between the strategies used by the proficient language students identified as gifted, and by those not so identified?

3. Will there be differences between the compositions written by the proficient second language learners identified as gifted, and by those not so identified?
4. If differences are discovered between the compositions of the two groups of proficient language learners, what are those differences?

5. What kinds of differences will be observed between the two groups of proficient language learners in the way in which they verbalize while thinking aloud as they compose?

Operational Definitions

Gifted Student: A student who has been identified as academically gifted by means of the identification procedures employed by the particular school system where s/he is enrolled.

Non-gifted Student: A student who has undergone the identification procedures employed by the particular school system where s/he is enrolled, but did not meet the established criteria for identification as "gifted."

Proficient Second Language Learner: A secondary school student enrolled in level II or level III of a foreign language who has been designated by his/her foreign language teacher as possessing especially well-developed listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in the target language. The proficient second language learner is also referred in the study as the good (second) language learner.
Learning Strategy: The process by which a student goes from a task as he defines it to a solution which he perceives as meeting the demand of the task (Hosenfeld, 1977).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction
Because this study concerns gifted students, the literature reviewed includes that topic in general along with the more specific one of foreign language and gifted. The review will also include research on the composing process, since the students will be writing a composition. In order to evaluate the compositions several measures of syntactic maturity will be used, and literature on this subject will, of necessity, be reviewed. Finally, since the students will be using a think aloud procedure as they write the composition, research on that subject has also been consulted.

Gifted and Talented
The definition of gifted and talented used in federal legislation in the United States is:

Gifted and talented children means children, and whenever applicable, youth, who are identified at the preschool, elementary or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic, or leadership ability, or in the performing and visual arts, and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school (Congressional Record, 1978).
This definition goes beyond the traditional concept of gifted, which considered only overall intellectual ability or specific academic aptitude.

Research into what constitutes giftedness indicates that the ability to manipulate internally learned symbol systems is essential to giftedness (Gallagher, 1975). Newland (1976) indicates that the biological predisposition of the organism to behave in the way called "generalizing" is the basis for the child's capability to acquire symbols. Symbols are used to denote things or classes of things, conditions, complexes of phenomena relationships, or patterns of relationships. That gifted students are able to manipulate these symbols earlier and to a higher degree than average students was shown in a study by Gallagher and Lucito (1961). They studied IQ test scores of gifted, average, and mentally retarded children with the purpose of describing the relative intellectual strengths and weaknesses of the subjects. The intellectual patterns derived from the scores were related to the major factors that have been consistently identified in factor analytic studies on the Wechsler scales. The average subjects showed no outstanding strengths and weaknesses when the same factors were analyzed. They found that the retarded subjects scored highest on the subtests related to the factor of Spatial-perceptual ability (Block Design, Object Assembly, Picture Completion.) These subjects showed a definite weakness in the area of stored information and short range memory, with a superior capacity to use structural concrete visual materials.
The gifted sample, on the other hand, ranked highest on the subtests related to Verbal Comprehension (Information, Similarities, Comprehension, Vocabulary.) Gallagher and Lucito point out that the gifted should be exposed to an analytical and evaluative type of curriculum rather than one which is restricted to the absorption of facts, skills, and information. The outstanding strength of the gifted lies in their large store of past information and the ability to associate concepts. Newland (1976) indicates that bright individuals manifest a superior "Intellectual adhesiveness" which is highly contributive to symbol acquisition (p. 16).

In recent years experts in the field of gifted education have begun to broaden the traditional language-oriented concept of giftedness. Gallagher (1975) states that, although language is the prime symbol system for our culture, a student can be gifted in other systems, such as mathematics, music, chemistry, art, and even social systems. He states that it is the ability to manipulate these systems that has encouraged the codification of a broader definition of gifted (p. 26).

This broad definition suggests that the number of gifted students may be larger than one would suspect. The fact is, however, that to be considered gifted or talented for special education provisions and federal programs, a student must be identified as performing in the top 3% to 5% of the school-aged population (Swassing, 1979). This means that if the population gets larger, the number of gifted students also increases in proportion to that growth. Swassing defines outstanding ability (i.e., that which occurs in the 3% to 5%
range) as that which is based on the performance of the individual compared to usual performance of age-mates on a given task or skill (p. 304). Broadening the definition has necessitated the use of a larger umbrella, but not multiple umbrellas.

Since the current definition of giftedness includes a number of areas, it follows that gifted students will differ from each other as much as they will differ from students not identified as gifted. Drews (1963) has found at least four groups of gifted adolescents with identifiable characteristics. The first group, which is also the one most easily identifiable for teachers, is that of the high-achieving, studious, gifted learners. They are rule-followers who try very hard to do their work following the directions as closely as possible. Serious students, who want tasks structured for them, they are concerned with how something is to be done but not why. They are interested in facts, and in learning for the sake of learning. Logical, organized, and punctual, they prefer lecture to discussion, tradition to innovation, and productivity to creativity. Education is regarded as something one must have to get ahead.

Drews labels the second type of student the social leader, which includes cheerleaders, quarterbacks (and their equivalents in other major sports), and class officers. Popular with students and faculty alike, they follow their peer group's values and socialize with all groups comfortably. Although they may identify with popular causes, they are not visionaries and never espouse unpopular ideas. They are attracted to vocations that pay well and have community status, such as medicine, law, and business.
According to Drews, the third type of gifted student is the creatively intellectual student. Compared to the first two types, these students receive lower grades, although they may have higher achievement test scores. Tending to be highly individualistic, they are seldom leaders, and show unwillingness to conform to standards set by the teachers or other students. They are creative, open-minded, skeptical, and idealistic. Their intensely serious nature is often relieved by zany humor. They prefer choice and enjoy structuring learning situations to fit their own needs and interests. They read widely, are introspective, and are more concerned with process than products. They are humanitarians in the broad sense, and they enjoy the pursuit of truth, beauty, and other universal values.

Drews' last and smallest group is the rebels. Although many are brilliant, they are radical nonconformists, and tend to be extremely low achievers. Teachers must spend much energy to gain even a modicum of cooperation or involvement from them. Predominantly of the lower class, this group shows very little concern for solving social problems or even for taking social responsibility. They are often found among delinquents and are usually at odds with their family, the school, and the community as a whole. While some will change with maturity, most will lead lives that deny their potential (Drews, 1963).

It is apparent then, that determining who the gifted are, and what they are like, is a very complex problem. Numerous lists of characteristics of gifted children are presented in the literature.
Maker (1982) has compiled a list of the characteristics most commonly identified by many outstanding authors in the field. The list is presented below.

**Learning Characteristics**

- Usually advanced vocabulary;
- Uses terms in a meaningful way;
- Richness of expression, elaboration and fluency;
- Possesses a large storehouse of information;
- Covers a wide variety of topics;
- Quick mastery and recall of factual information;
- Rapid insight into cause-effect relationships;
- Asks many provocative questions;
- Has a ready grasp of underlying principles;
- Quickly makes valid generalizations;
- Seeks similarities and differences in events, people and things;
- Keen and alert observer;
- Prefers adult level books;
- Does not avoid difficult material;
- Shows a preference for biography, autobiography, encyclopedias, and atlases;
- Tries to understand complicated material by separating it into component parts;
- Reasons things out for himself.

**Creativity Characteristics**

- Displays great curiosity;
- Asks questions about anything and everything;
Generates a large number of ideas for solutions to problems and questions;
Often offers unusual, unique, clever responses;
Is uninhibited in expressions of opinion;
Sometimes radical and spirited in disagreement;
Is tenacious;
Is a high risk taker;
Is adventurous and speculative;
Displays a good deal of intellectual playfulness;
Fantasizes, imagines, manipulates ideas;
Concerned with adapting, improving and modifying institutions, objects and systems;
Displays a keen sense of humor;
Sees humor in situations that may not appear humorous to others;
Is usually aware of his impulses;
Shows emotional sensitivity;
Is sensitive to beauty;
Attends to the aesthetic characteristics of things;
Is nonconforming;
Accepts disorder;
Is not interested in details;
Is individualistic;
Does not fear being different;
Criticizes constructively;
Is unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination.
Motivation Characteristics

Becomes absorbed and truly involved in certain topics or problems;

Is persistent in seeking task completion;

Is easily bored with routine;

Needs little external motivation to follow through in work that initially excites him;

Strives toward perfection;

Is self-critical;

Is not easily satisfied with his own speed or products;

Prefers to work independently;

Requires little direction from teachers;

Is interested in many "adult" problems such as religion, politics, sex, and race;

Often is self-assertive (even aggressive);

Stubborn in his beliefs;

Likes to organize;

Is quite concerned about right and wrong, good and bad;

Often evaluates and passes judgment on events, people and things.

(pp. 7-18)

This list reflects the group, not the individual. In speaking of identifying gifted children, Swassing (1979) comments: "It is by their very giftedness that these children are unique, and this uniqueness defies any attempts to categorize them into neat, well-ordered compartments (p. 308)."

The very characteristics that make children gifted can cause them problems. For example, perfectionism, a trait commonly found in
gifted students, can become compulsive behavior. This trait can also affect these students' acceptance of other people, and seriously interfere with interpersonal relationships (Clark, 1979, pp. 78-9.) Swassing (1979) presents the "Two Sides of Gifted Behavior" in chart form:

**TWO SIDES TO THE BEHAVIOR OF THE GIFTED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List A (Positive behaviors)</th>
<th>List B (Negative behaviors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Expresses ideas and feelings well.</td>
<td>1. May be glib, making fluent statements based on little or no knowledge or understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Can move at a rapid pace.</td>
<td>2. May dominate discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Works conscientiously.</td>
<td>3. May be impatient to proceed to next level or task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Wants to learn, explore, and seek more information.</td>
<td>4. May be considered nosy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Develops broad knowledge and an extensive store or vicarious experiences.</td>
<td>5. May choose reading at the expense of active participation in social, creative, or physical activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Is sensitive to the feelings and rights of others.</td>
<td>6. May struggle against rules, regulations and standardized procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Makes steady progress.</td>
<td>7. May lead discussions &quot;off the track.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Makes original and stimulating contributions to discussions.</td>
<td>8. May be frustrated by the apparent absence of logic in activities and daily events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Learns material quickly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Is able to use reading skills to obtain new information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Contributes to enjoyment of life of self and others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Completes assigned tasks.


10. May use humor to manipulate.

11. May resist a schedule based on time rather than task.

12. May lose interest quickly.

Gifted students may exhibit behavior from either or both sides of the chart. Classroom teachers need to be made aware of these dichotomous behaviors in order to be better prepared to meet the needs of gifted students on a daily basis.

Foreign Language Learners: The Good and the Gifted

In the previous section on gifted and talented learners a great deal was said about characteristics of these students. In this section what makes learners good or gifted in foreign language learning will be discussed. Being a good language learner does not necessarily imply that a student is also gifted.

Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) developed lists of characteristics of persons who are successful in learning a second language. Rubin developed her list on the basis of her observations of students in the classroom, whereas Stern’s list was derived from his experience as a teacher and learner, and his knowledge of research in the field. The list of Nalman, et al (1978), expressing the characteristics as strategies second language learners use in the overall approach to
successful language acquisition, grew out of a study of language students by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. The following items appear on all three lists in some way:

1. Students realize that language is a means of communication, and are willing to communicate in the target language. This includes constant searching for meaning.

2. Students realize that language is a system.

3. Students have an active approach to the learning task. They are willing to practice, even actively seeking out opportunities to use the language.

4. Students monitor their own speech and that of others. They are constantly revising their second language system.

Stern and Naiman include an affective element that is expressed as a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language and empathy with its speakers. Rubin adds that the good language learner is a willing and accurate guesser and is uninhibited. Stern provides three other characteristics: (1) a personal learning style or positive learning strategies, (2) technical know-how about how to tackle a language, and (3) developing the target language more and more as a reference system and learning to think in it.

Brown (1978), on the other hand, considers the good language learner almost impossible to define: "At times the good language learner seems best defined as the learner who is recognized to be such by his teachers and fellow learners. And often teachers do have a rather uncanny, intuitively accurate perception of who the "good" and "bad" learners are in the classroom (p. 3)." Brown suggests six...
possible distinguishing characteristics of the good language learner based on his research. His first characteristic is field independence. In this he agrees with the previously mentioned experts, who expressed this learning style as the characteristic of students monitoring their language. Nalman, et al (1978), also identified this quality as an important factor in language learning, along with empathy. Brown indicates that empathy correlates highly with field dependence. Paradoxically, then, Brown's first two characteristics are field independence, and field dependence (tied with empathy). He states that the latter are essential for communication. The remainder of the list includes meaningful contexts of communication, feedback, optimal social distance—where the learner is neither too close nor too far from either of his own culture or the target culture and self-esteem (Brown, 1978, pp. 4-5).

As Brown expressed two of the characteristics of good language learners in terms of learning styles (field independence and field dependence) so Nalman, et al, found one other learning style to be significant in language learning. They identified tolerance of ambiguity as an important factor in language learning. They also indicated cautiously that aptitude was less of a crucial factor than attitude toward language learning, persistence, and willingness to adapt to varied learning situations over prolonged periods of time (p. 99).

The question arises as to what the relationship is between the good language learner and the gifted student who is a language
learner. Research on the subject suggests that the two language learners are not necessarily the same.

For example, a publication in 1960 centered on modern foreign languages and the academically talented student. The main concern was that the student be able to begin learning a second language early enough that s/he would have time to learn other languages before the period of public schooling was complete. The publication recommended a minimum four year program, an Intermediate six year program, and an Ideal ten year program (National, 1960).

Since that work was published the concept of giftedness as a broader concept than simple academic talent has gained acceptance. Franklin and Friedl (1973) observe that although some gifted students do not have the necessary abilities to master foreign languages many students who perform in the average range on mental ability tests may possess linguistic talent. They go on to say, however, that students who are identified as gifted and who are also talented in languages will need experiences beyond the usual classwork to enhance giftedness in the higher cognitive skills (p. 4).

In an examination of identification procedures for students gifted in foreign languages, Bartz (1977) emphasizes the inadequacy of the IQ test alone to identify these students. He finds that the parts of the PLAB (Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery) combine to form a valid identification measure for students who will be successful in language learning. Grade point average rather than IQ is considered. The other parts consist of interest, vocabulary, language analysis, and sound discrimination. Bartz also goes on to
say, however, that the identification of giftedness in foreign languages or any other area must involve multiple, equally weighted factors and cannot be determined by a single measure or identification procedure. He lists teacher observation, peer nomination, parent nomination, and formal testing and measurement procedures as appropriate components of the identification process (p. 12).

Carlson (1981) studied the characteristics of students who are gifted and talented in foreign language learning. Specifically, she wanted to find out how selected foreign language teachers perceive the characteristics of students who are gifted and talented in foreign language learning. She questioned whether or not the characteristics differed according to the particular foreign language in question, and if the characteristics were uniquely foreign language-oriented (p. 386).

Carlson selected ten student factors in foreign language learning: intelligence, verbal ability, ability to memorize, general scholastic ability, study habits, motivation and attitudes, personality, auditory ability, previous foreign language training, and bilingual background. After reviewing the professional literature concerning the importance of these factors in foreign language learning, Carlson interviewed five foreign language teachers and five foreign language students in order to obtain pertinent information for constructing a pilot questionnaire. The five teachers were identified by the Maryland State Specialist in Foreign Languages as outstanding teachers who had some experience working
with students demonstrating a talent for learning a foreign language. The five students interviewed were chosen on the basis of having scored extremely high on language contests sponsored by the various foreign language professional organizations.

Based on the literature review and the information collected during the interviews, Carlson developed a list of behavioral characteristics of students who are gifted and talented in foreign language study. The characteristics were divided into four dimensions:

1. Characteristics applicable to many areas of study;
2. Characteristics applicable to language arts;
3. Characteristics applicable to music;
4. Characteristics unique to the area of foreign language study (p. 387).

In a pilot study, the subjects were asked to indicate whether or not they felt that each of the 59 characteristics listed described the behavior or abilities of students who are gifted and talented in foreign language learning. They were also asked to indicate whether or not each of the characteristics had been placed in the appropriate dimension.

After analyzing the results of the pilot study, Carlson revised the list to 47 characteristics and sent it in the form of a questionnaire to foreign language teachers in the state of Maryland. The respondents were requested to indicate whether or not they endorsed each of the characteristics as a descriptor of the behavior
Carlson analyzed the results of the questionnaires to determine which characteristics were endorsed by at least 75% of the teachers. She found that there was a difference in the characteristics endorsed by at least 75% of each of the groups of foreign language teachers. Carlson's list is expressed as specific observable behaviors or abilities the students demonstrate in the classroom. Significantly more of the French teachers than the German endorsed the following characteristics:

1. The student reads the target language for ideas rather than words;
2. The student gets the meaning of unknown vocabulary through context when listening or reading in the target language;
3. The student quickly grasps new concepts involving any of the four skills of the target language;
4. The student picks up and retains new foreign language expressions spoken by the teacher that other students do not notice.

(Carlson, 1981, p. 388)

Significantly more of the French teachers than the Spanish endorsed the following characteristics:

1. The student reads the target language for ideas rather than words;
2. The student has an ear for music.

As noted above, the five characteristics that proved to be significantly different were all endorsed by more of the French teachers. Two of them are applicable to language arts, four imply or
directly deal with successful learning of new material, and four deal specifically with one or both of the passive language skills. Carlson speculates that French teachers may stress these kinds of learning more than German or Spanish teachers do. She also notes that more differences might have been detected among the groups if the response rate had been higher (p. 389).

A position paper by the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages points to characteristics identified by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education as those of a successful second language learner. Also listed in the paper are four areas in which gifted students display specific traits. Elaboration of these traits appears in chapter one of this paper. Each trait carries with it a set of needs that must be met in order for gifted students to have a satisfactory educational experience.

The first area listed in the paper is that of language. The authors of the position paper indicate that gifted students need to work and interact with their intellectual peers. They need appropriate reading materials, especially with regard to content, right from the beginning of their foreign language learning experience. Writing activities should include fewer highly controlled, fill-in-the-blank exercises and more open-ended, free expression, communicative-type exercises. These students also need the opportunity to do independent research projects, especially in the area of culture.

In the second area, conceptualization, the authors state that gifted students need divergent and open-ended teaching strategies
because they are inquisitive and want to explore beyond the usual confines of lesson content. There also should be enough flexibility in classroom management to allow the gifted child to do some exploring of topics of interest on his/her own. There should be less emphasis for these students on rote drill, and more emphasis on communicative exercises. These students will want to know the rules and rationale for certain language grammar points. The authors also indicate that allowance should be made in the foreign language classroom for the gifted child to be rewarded and recognized for his/her unique abilities and accomplishments.

In the area of socialization, gifted students need opportunities to assume various roles in group interaction. As gifted students may not always be leaders, the teacher must be responsible for identifying the specific roles in which these students will function best and will contribute the most to the group activity. Gifted students need increased exposure to people of varied backgrounds, especially to native speakers and other representatives of the foreign culture. The authors indicate that gifted children may display traits of nonconformity, and that an effort should be made to accept these traits, especially in the area of socialization where the gifted child may find it difficult to gain acceptance with his/her chronological peers.

The last area listed in the paper is that of productivity. Gifted students, because of their high intellectual and physical level, self-motivation, high standards and goals, and prolonged attention span, have the potential to be extremely productive.
Varied opportunities should be provided for these students to take advantage of their productivity traits. The authors also point out that special projects for the gifted child should be provided where s/he can pursue his/her interests in order to develop skills in research and other areas beyond that of the average student (National Council, 1982, p. 332).

As mentioned in the preceding section of this chapter, gifted students do not fit any particular mold. They may display any combination of the traits listed above, or of those listed previously. The concern of the authors of the position paper is that foreign language teachers be aware of the existence of gifted students in their classrooms, and that they realize that these students need a program that is qualitatively different from that provided for the average student.

Efforts have been made in various parts of the country to provide foreign language instruction for gifted students. These programs are varied in form and concept. One example of such programs is described by Satterthwaite (1980), who developed materials to meet a special situation. Administrators and teachers in Broward County, Florida, felt that the addition of a foreign language, especially Spanish, because of demographic concerns, would be beneficial in the early grades. It was not possible, however, to provide special teachers to meet the need. Satterthwaite designed and validated an Instructional guide for teaching Spanish to be used by regular teachers of gifted children K-6. It was found that in the test classes the students did learn Spanish when the teachers used the
guide. In other words, in the absence of a regular Spanish class, teaching via Satterthwaite's guide bridged the gap.

Another program for younger gifted students is Chicago's District 27 Gifted Center for Spanish and Science. Students, grades 3-6, are bused there from thirty-three different schools in three adjacent school districts in order to study one-half day of Spanish and one-half day of science twice a week. The unique characteristic of this program is not its content, which consists of activities typical of language classes across the board, but rather the pace and quantity of activities needed to meet the students' needs. Murphy (1981) comments that the basic challenge of the second year was the development of even more exciting things than had been done the year before—a challenge because they had done almost everything the first year (p. 111). She notes that the second year children were directing many of their own activities. The program points up the ability of highly motivated gifted students to accomplish a great deal in a short period of time.

The program probably best known among educators of the gifted because of its connection with the famous SMPY (Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth) program is the PVGY (Program for Verbally Gifted Youth) at Johns Hopkins. This program, begun in 1978, has as its primary pedagogical aim to offer to verbally gifted youth of junior high level the opportunity to perfect their writing skills in a university framework. Among the courses selected to directly support this goal is that of beginning German (Durden, 1980). The students were selected by means of their scores on the
SAT-V (Scholastic Aptitude Test-Verbal) and their performance on the Test of Standard English (TSWE).

The beginning German class, consisting of eleven students, was taught as a fast-paced college class. The instructors found that, even as gifted youngsters, the students did not constitute a homogeneous group. They observed differences in ability to imitate German sounds, in grasping points of grammar, and in retaining learned material (McClain and Durden, 1980). The classes made use of competitive games, group work, and writing to pen pals in Germany, all of which the instructors found to be successful in facilitating student learning.

Based on their experiences, the instructors feel that the best texts are readings that are imaginative, but not too abstract. Their students particularly liked original versions of the Grimm's fairy tales. This was fortunate, because the instructors believe that the fairy tales, in spite of their seeming simplicity, exemplify many of the literary values of which students should be aware. For a class format, McClain and Durden prefer an informal workshop situation to permit verbally gifted young people to express themselves with a minimum amount of restraints. One aspect of the workshop-type class that they consider of potential value for all junior high school beginning foreign language classes is the mentor-type experience in which one student helps another, and in so doing perfects his own skill (p. 221).
These examples show that there is interest in and concern for the needs of gifted students, and how these needs are being met in foreign language classes.

The Composing Process

The composition was chosen for the instrument in this study for several reasons. It is a concrete protocol, one that clearly shows the state of the student's written language ability at a given moment. Writing is a productive rather than a receptive skill, and as such necessitates a certain degree of very specific knowledge and skill on the part of the student to achieve it. On a measure of reading in the target language, for example, a student may bring his native language skills to bear on solving whatever problem is presented. This strategy is less effective in writing in the target language, however.

Students are accustomed to writing compositions of various types and lengths in their native language, but often have had very little experience with that mode of expression in the target language. Since there has been little research in second language composition, it has been necessary to investigate literature on the nature of native-language composition in order to better understand what is involved in evaluating a composition. In this section of the chapter the composing process will be discussed, as well as measures for evaluating compositions.

The writing process is defined by Cooper and Odell (1977) as follows:
Composing involves exploring and mulling over a subject; planning the particular piece (with or without notes or outline); getting started; making discoveries about feelings, values or ideas, even while in the process of writing a draft; making continuous decisions about diction, syntax, and rhetoric in relation to the intended meaning and to the meaning taking shape; reviewing what has accumulated, and anticipating and rehearsing what comes next; tinkering and reformulating; stopping; contemplating the finished piece and perhaps, finally revising. This complex, unpredictable, demanding activity is what we call the writing process (p. 9).

There is disagreement among researchers and educators, however, about components of this definition and their relative importance in the composing process. A case in point is the preparation of a written outline before beginning a piece of writing, a procedure noted as optional by Cooper and Odell. The most widely used composition textbooks encourage the writing of an outline as a process used by experienced writers. Emig (1977) polled sixteen professional writers regarding their planning practices, and to the question about preparing a written outline only four responded with an unequivocal affirmative. The majority indicated that they made some kind of informal outline adapted to their individual styles of working and to the mode of the piece involved. Four others, all writers of poetry, novels, or short stories, stated that they either never (in the case of poetry) or seldom made elaborate written outlines (pp. 22-24). This example indicates that there is a disparity between what the textbooks say that writers are supposed to do, and what they actually do.

That writing is done in stages is generally accepted, but there is variation in how the stages are divided and what they are called.
Emig's (1977) research into the composing process led her to the conclusion that there are ten dimensions to be considered:

1. **Context of composing**: community, family, school.

2. **Nature of stimulus**: Emig includes three areas under this heading: registers, including field of discourse, mode of discourse, and tenor of discourse; self-encountered stimulus; other-encountered stimulus, encompassing assignment by teacher and reception of assignment by student.

3. **Prewriting**: This is divided into self-sponsored writing and teacher-initiated or school-sponsored writing, and is subdivided into the categories of length of period, nature of musings and elements contemplated, and interveners and interventions.

4. **Planning**: Sub-headings for this dimension are the same as for number 3, with the following categories: initial planning and later planning, each subdivided by length of planning, mode of planning, scope, and interveners and interventions.

5. **Starting**: The sub-headings are the same as for numbers 3 and 4, and are divided into the categories of seeming ease or difficulty of decision, element treated first discursively, context and conditions under which writing began, and interveners and interventions.

6. **Composing aloud: a characterization**: Emig divides this dimension into three parts: selecting and ordering components, including anticipation/abeyance, kinds of transformational operations, and style; other observed behaviors, such as silence and vocalized hesitation phenomena; and tempo of composing, comprised of composing and hesitational behaviors and relevance of certain theoretical statements concerning spontaneous speech.

7. **Reformulation**: The two major divisions of this dimension are type of task, such as correcting, revising, or rewriting, and transforming operations, including addition, deletion, reordering or substitution, and embedding.

8. **Stopping**: Divided into formulation and reformulation, Emig subdivides both into the categories of seeming ease or difficulty of decision, element treated last, context and conditions under which writing stopped, and seeming effect of parameters and variables.
9. Contemplation of product. This dimension has four parts: length of contemplation, unit contemplated, effect of product upon self, and anticipated effect upon reader.

10. Seeming teacher influence on piece. Under this dimension Emig considers elements of product affected, subdivided into the categories of registers, formulation of title or topic, length, purpose, audience, deadline, amenities, treatment of written outcome, and others.

(Emig, 1977, pp. 34-35)

Emig's dimensions have quite a bit in common with Cooper and Odell's definition. She includes revising under "reformulation," and, since she is viewing composition from the standpoint of education, includes "context of composing" and "seeming teacher influence" among her dimensions.

Emig considers the process of revision only under her dimension of reformulation, but Della-Plana (1978) points out that revision occurs throughout Emig's concept of the composing process. Della-Plana regards revision as the process of achieving congruency—making a piece of writing more consonant or congruent with one's image of what the piece of writing is intended to accomplish (p. 114). He sees the writing process as a sort of "flow chart", beginning with preconception and set on the left; flowing to the right to discrimination—seeing what the work does or does not do, or what the work itself suggests as to what it is about; and dissonance—seeing matches or mismatches between what the work does, what one intends, and what the work itself suggests. The chart then flows downward to "tension"—concern with getting the work to do what
one intends or what the work itself suggests; and finally it flows
back to the left for "reconception", which is the final resolution
and revision stage (p. 115).

Della-Plana indicates that there is no implication that the
revision process is necessarily a conscious one, that the elements
flow in a fixed sequence, or that the writer see a dissonance, feel
tension, or try to resolve the tension by matching one's intention
with one's perception of what the work does (p. 116).

Another educator in the field of writing who believes that the
revision process is a key stage in writing is Murray. He calls the
various states in writing (1) "prevision", which includes the skills
of title and lead writing, which help the writer identify a subject,
limit it, develop a point of view towards it, and begin to find the
voice to explore the subject, (2) "vision"—the first draft, and
needing the shortest time of the three stages, and (3)
"revision"—what a writer does to a draft to understand and
Della-Plana suggests that the processes are not necessarily conscious
tones. Murray is convinced that they are not. He states that writers
much of the time do not know what they are going to write or even
possibly what they have written. He speaks from his own experiences
and from those of fellow workers (p. 96). Murray regards writing as
discovery and has come to believe that the process of discovery, of
using language to find out what one is going to say, is a key part of
the writing process (p. 100). He divides the revision process into
"internal revision" and "external revision."
He states that most writers spend a great deal of time on internal revision, which, according to Murray, is everything that writers do to discover and develop what they have to say, beginning with the reading of the first draft. External revision, the kind of revision emphasized in most composition textbooks, is what writers do to communicate what they have found they have written to another audience: editing, proofreading, form, mechanics and style (p. 100).

Britton (1978), in his research on the writing processes of English schoolchildren, examined writing in relation to function categories: "What is it for?" He divides writing functions into three principal categories: transactional, expressive, and poetic (p. 29). Using Harding's Four Modes of Response to Experience as a model, Britton considers the writer in the role of participant or spectator. The role of participant is derived from what Harding called "operative", when we participate in events, and "intellectual", when we seek to comprehend without any attempt to modify. The role of spectator is comprised of Harding's "perceptual", the experiencing and organizing of perceptions, and "detached evaluative response" (p. 29). He places the expressive function in the middle of the three, and describes it as being informal, casual, loosely structured, and being able, in a sort of underdeveloped way, to serve either the participant or the spectator roles. The transactional category meets the demands of the participant, and the poetic, those of the spectator (p. 31).

Britton divides the writing process into three stages: preparation, incubation, and articulation. He, too, admits that the
organization of the writing project may be unconscious—he states it as being done "at an involuntary level"—and that this holds true for the transactional and poetic categories (p. 36). Britton, paralleling Murray's "Discovery process," theorizes that the writer develops an inner voice capable of dictating to him/her in the forms of the written language. "We focus on the end in view, shaping the utterance as we write, and when the seam is 'played out' or we are interrupted, we get started again by reading what we have written, running along the tracks we have laid down" (p. 37).

Britton's stages follow the same pattern as those described by Emig, Della-Plana and Murray. Mellon (1977), synthesizing the stages of the composing process as described by a number of researchers, segmented it into "prewriting, specific planning, transcribing and reformulating" (p. 7). This division of stages seems to contain the essence of the other stages described above.

The composing process has been considered from the standpoint of English because that is where the research has been done. Zamel (1983), however, has studied the composing processes of advanced ESL students. This research, although still related to English composition, considers English as a foreign language. Zamel found that, rather than reflecting the stages of prewriting, writing and revising usually associated with the composing process, the students' writing behaviors did not lend themselves completely to this type of breakdown. Zamel found this to be the case with skilled and unskilled writers, which fact, she states, attests to the non-linear nature of writing. She found that, although some initial planning
took place, students continued the planning during the writing process, feeling free to rethink their original ideas and revising throughout the entire time. According to Zamel, one of the major findings of the study was the extent to which ESL advanced writers understood that composing involves the constant interplay of thinking, writing, and rewriting (p. 172).

One of the major questions addressed in this study was the extent to which writing in a second language affects the composing processes of advanced-level ESL students. Zamel found that the linguistic problems seemed to concern the students the least. The least skilled writer, determined not to commit errors, attended to them early in the writing activity. The more skilled writers, on the other hand, devised strategies that allowed them to develop their ideas without being sidetracked by lexical and syntactic difficulties. Some of these strategies included writing down the English word in question and circling it, leaving blanks for words or phrases they were unable to think of, or using a native language word when the word(s) in English would not come to mind. For the skilled writers, the ideas they were pursuing were of primary importance, and the grammatical and lexical items could be corrected or filled in later. Zamel notes, however, that the papers were not error-free. Her observations of students as they worked to produce a finished piece of writing convinced her that, rather than being caused by carelessness, the errors were more a result of incomplete control of the language (p. 175).
The results of Zamel's study suggest that ESL students, like native speakers of English, should be allowed the opportunity to explore their ideas with reference to a topic, hopefully a topic that truly engages them, and to make decisions about the most effective way to communicate these ideas. Zamel shows great concern for the development of good writing skills for advanced ESL students. In an earlier article (1976) she commented that ESL students would eventually be able to create and express their own ideas in the second language and would need the same kind of instruction that students in regular English classes need (p. 68). Taylor (1976) does not believe that it is necessary to wait until the ESL student has mastered the language to begin teaching composition. He states, rather, that composition writing is made up of non-linguistic factors that can be taught to the student even in low level classes (p. 211).

Gaudiani (1981) believes that college English and foreign language departments should work together to help students write more effectively. She contends that the skills needed for good expository writing are not language-specific in the Indo-European language group (p. 1). Gaudiani points out the obvious difference that, while native speakers of English will have command of 85-90% of the vocabulary and grammar structures needed for writing, second language students may control less than 15%. In her opinion, English teachers help students draw on their tacit competence, discover and refine written language hidden in the aural-oral knowledge of the native tongue. Foreign language teachers build toward a version of native competence in the process of developing writing skills (p. 4).
Further indication of first- and second-language cooperation in the development of writing skills appeared in the 1983 Northeast Conference Report (Gaudianl and others). A growing number of college foreign language programs are successfully using writing methods borrowed from English composition classes. The report also mentions a research project involving the writing of compositions in French and English, the purpose of which is to determine the effect of the experimental foreign language program on students' English literacy (p. 70).

One important factor in composition already mentioned by Zamel is the involvement of the student with the topic s/he is to write about. Mellon (1977) alludes to research that provides evidence that the extent to which writing is self-sponsored rather than teacher-required and spectator rather than participant governs the extent to which student writers will undertake and preserve in productive composing behaviors (p. 7). Emig (1977) included "seeming teacher influence on piece" as one of her dimensions of the composing process. She finds that extensive writing occurs mainly as a school-sponsored activity, while reflexive writing is generally undertaken for oneself, or for a trusted peer (p. 91). Implicit in this is the notion that extensive writing is assigned, not chosen voluntarily.

Britton (1978), after having analyzed 2000 scripts written by English schoolchildren, found that the quality of the product bore a direct relationship to the degree to which a writer appeared to make the teacher-set task his or her own (p. 27). Zamel (1976) also
points to research by Emig (1977) and Radcliffe (1972) and to that of British researchers (Squire and Applebee, 1969) that indicates that an individual's purpose or desire for writing must be considered, and that a climate must be established that encourages writing (p. 74).

The composition has been considered in the light of the various stages writers pass through in its preparation. T. Cooper describes briefly what composition is, and introduces an element in composing that this writer believes deserves some attention: the syntactic maturity of the writing.

**Syntactic Maturity**

"Composition" is characterized to a large degree by quality of style. Superior writers are able to concentrate information into a few words through the use of sophisticated syntax and concise turns of phrase. They are also skilled in describing an object, expressing an idea, or narrating an event in a number of different ways. They possess....a certain intuitive feeling for using different syntactic patterns (T. Cooper, 1978, p. 6).

The ability to compress an increasingly large number of ideas into fewer words is called syntactic maturity. The term was coined by Kellogg Hunt, who developed a methodology for measuring and analyzing the acquisition of written syntax among students of varying ages. Before Hunt began his studies, sentence length (words per sentence) was thought to be the best indicator of maturity in sentence information. Hunt discovered that children tend to write longer sentences than adults. They simply string clauses together,
In either a run-on fashion, or connected by "and". Hunt found that a better measure for syntactic maturity was the T-unit (minimal terminal unit), a term he also created. A T-unit is a main clause and any subordinate clauses or non-clausal structures that are attached to or embedded within it (Hunt, 1968, p. 4).

As a result of his studies, Hunt declared the three principal indices of syntactic maturity to be average clause length in words, ratio of subordinate clauses to main clauses, and the average T-unit length in words (Hunt, 1967, p. 45). By applying these measures to writing samples produced by students of various ages, Hunt discovered that maturity of expression has a direct relationship to the ability to make sentence embedding transformations. On the average, older children tend to produce longer, more syntactically complex sentences by using more clauses with finite verbs, subclausal constructions such as prepositional and infinitive phrases, and single word modifiers. Hunt also analyzed the products of skilled adult writers, and he found that they are able to say more with fewer words, even though their actual sentences may be longer because of more complex syntax (T. Cooper, 1978, p. 6).

The results of this and subsequent studies caused Hunt to conclude that there is a definite order in the acquisition of grammatical constructions. Nine and ten year old children tend to express themselves in kernel, or skeletal, sentences, with few, or none, of the modifiers that provide supplementary information. Young teenagers are easily able to generate sentence embedding transformations such as adverbial and relative clauses, prepositional
phrases, adjective constructions, etc. The frequency of use of clauses with finite verbs seems to reach a peak in the latter teenage years, although Hunt found that clauses continued to be longer for them, and for the "skilled adults" (Hunt, 1967, p. 46; T. Cooper, 1981, pp. 6-7). The writing of both of the latter groups showed increased use of subclausal constructions and single word modifiers.

Hunt conducted another study to determine whether or not the use of longer clauses and T-units was related to mental as well as chronological age. He chose as subjects ninth and twelfth grade students who had scored 90-100 (average) on the short form of the California Mental Maturity Test, and 130 and above (superior) on the same test. The results of the study showed that students with higher mental age and ability scores also scored higher on measures of syntactic maturity than those with average scores. The students with average scores, in turn, scored higher on syntactic maturity than the students with below average mental age and ability scores. This finding is especially interesting for this study because some of the subjects have been identified as gifted, implying a higher mental age than the average student.

In his earlier study, Hunt (1967) used samples of students' free writing as a basis for analysis. In order to control the content, Hunt developed an instrument consisting of a group of logically related kernel sentences. The students were asked to rewrite the passage in a better way, by combining the sentences in different ways, but not leaving out any of the material (Hunt, 1968, p. 6).
Hunt found this to be a much more valid means of testing for syntactic maturity than the use of free writing samples.

Hunt used sentence combining as a measurement device, but the existence of such a device triggered the notion that practice in combining sentences might enable students to shorten the time needed to achieve syntactic maturity. A number of researchers investigated using a device like Hunt's as an exercise to teach students to combine sentences more effectively, and thus, write in a more syntactically mature fashion. O'Hare (1973) and Mellon, presently of the National Writing Assessment, are two of the more well-known exponents of the use of sentence combining practice in the classroom. Mellon (1980) states that the purpose of a sentence-combining practice in school is to make students more conscious of the choices available for expressing their ideas than they otherwise might be, and to give them experience in exercising these choices in sentences more mature in structure than they otherwise might write (p. 8). The Assessment uses specific sentence combining tasks, rather than free writing, in order to assess sentence combining skill on a competence basis (what the writer can do when put to a specific task) as distinct from assessing on a performance basis (what the writer happens to do when writing actual essays). Mellon states that from about age seventeen clause length rather than T-unit length is an indicator of maturity, and the number of unreduced (finite verb) clauses per T-unit decreases as writers learn to reduce more of these clauses to phrase form (p. 49).
Mellon's taxonomy of compositional competencies, developed to aid teachers in helping students write compositions, includes the following:

1. Lexical and sentence competencies
2. Discourse competencies
3. Psychological competencies
4. Competence in conforming to the "rules of the writing game"
5. Habit structures and self-governance
6. Accidental problems requiring special instruction or therapy

(Mellon, 1977)

Although the work of Hunt, O'Hare and Mellon is widely accepted, there has been disagreement about what constitutes syntactic maturity, or a mature style. Christensen states that the long noun phrase is the work of the inept writer rather than the skilled one—"the easy writing that's curst hard reading (Christensen, 1978, p. 141)." He compared essays of six authors, two non-professional, with regard to words per T-unit, number of free modifiers (non-restricted as opposed to required, or restrictive), and number of words per base clause. The only significant variation was number of words in free modifiers and length of base clause. He found that the T-units were long, but it was because of the free modifiers; the base clauses were short (p. 146).

Broadhead and Berlin (1978) point out that Christensen felt that in addition to T-unit and base clause, one should look at the frequency and variety of free modifiers, type and position, and
punctuation. They wanted to see what effect these various elements would have on evaluation of students' free writing by teachers and independent readers. The results of their study provided evidence that when presented with T-units of equal length evaluators preferred those in which the length was achieved by means of relatively short base clauses and relatively high frequency of modifiers (Broadhead and Berlin, 1978).

Data supports the belief that variety as well as length is an important aspect of syntactic complexity. In good writing greater length is accompanied by greater variety.

Syntactic Maturity in Second Language Learning

Hunt's measures of syntactic maturity have been shown to be applicable to languages other than English. Hunt's study was replicated by Dutch researchers in 1971, who concluded that there was a great similarity between Dutch and American children in syntactic development (Hunt, 1977, p. 110). Hunt's measures have also been applied to the languages of Fijian, Indonesian, Korean, Laotian, and Marsallese, and the results were similar to those in English (p. 110).

Gales (1976) and Larsen-Freeman and Strom (1977) have measured syntactic maturity in learners of English as a second language. Gales used Hunt's Instrument to measure his student's syntactic maturity because he found that students tended to avoid using complex syntactic structures in free writing exercises even though they actually had nearly full control over them (p. 3). Gales feels that
a second language learner's ability to produce syntactically mature prose depends at least in part on his/her ability to exploit the sentence combining transformations available to him/her in the target language (p. 5). Gales questioned the relationship between students' ability to recognize syntactically correct structures, as on the TOEFL test, and being able to produce syntactically correct structures, as on a composition. Using a rewrite measure as described by Hunt, Gales tested native speakers of English, highly proficient non-native speakers, and non-native speakers currently enrolled in Intensive English Improvement classes. The results correlated with those obtained by Hunt, but the most significant finding for Gales was that there was a low correlation between the scores of the non-native speakers on the rewrite measure, and their score on the English structure section of the TOEFL test. Gales concluded that Hunt's Instrument does measure the ability to manipulate grammar as a component of writing ability; however, active and passive skills in grammar do not necessarily go together (Gales, 1976, p. 6).

Larsen-Freeman and Strom (1977) wanted to find an Index of development by means of which proficiency in ESL could be gauged. Schumann (1976) had used mean length of utterance in morphemes (MLU) as a measure of development for beginning students. Larsen-Freeman noted that in second language research learners are more cognitively mature and, therefore, capable of producing utterances of more than a few morphemes in length shortly after initial contact with language. In order to attempt to construct a second-language index of
development she used written compositions because they were accessible and written data seemed easier to work with than spoken (p. 125). The features included in the index are:

1. **Writing mechanics**: punctuation, spelling, capitalization; organization, clarity, syntactic sophistication

2. **Lexical choice**

3. **Ability to write grammatically**: morphology, syntax, prepositions, tenses, aspect, articles, subject-verb agreement, case, negation

4. **Sentence violations** like fragments and run-ons

5. **Content**: relevance to topic, degree of interest, sophistication of treatment

(Larson-Freeman and Strom, 1977, p. 26)

They found that because of the wide variance, types of errors could not be used to distinguish Intermediate level from beginning and advanced. They did find, however, that accuracy in spelling, lexical choice, syntactic complexity, and tense usage increased at the advance level. Problems with prepositions and articles appeared across all levels. They found correlation between length in words and evaluation, and speculated that longer length might be attributed to better command of syntax or vocabulary by subjects, or willingness of subjects with better command of syntax or vocabulary with greater confidence in ability to be more expansive and take greater risks of committing errors (pp. 129-130).

Gales reviewed studies using T-unit analysis to characterize the syntactic nature of linguistic input, and to assess the syntactic maturity of learners' written products. The results are that T-unit
analysts provides an objective and reliable method of determining the overall syntactic complexity of language samples (Gales, 1979). In his review Gales notes that in measuring syntactic maturity in second language students one must deal with error. One makes errors in the second language that one does not make in the first language. Researchers in the field have developed the error-free T-unit. They feel that an index of language growth ought in some way to reflect the incidence of developmental errors (p. 5). There is a difference, however, about what constitutes error. Larson-Freeman (1977) believes that the T-unit must be perfect including punctuation and spelling. Scott and Tucker (1974) accept T-units with no morphological or syntactic errors, whereas Vann (1978) accepts T-units that make sense in the given context and are free of morpho-syntactic and lexical errors. Gales comments that the fact that error must be accounted for in a modified index of language development in adult second language acquisition is an important implication. It amounts to a concession that there is a qualitative difference in the developmental processes of first and second language acquisition.

Gales summarizes the usefulness of T-unit analysis in second language acquisition, indicating first that the results reflect the fact that in both cases (second and first language acquisition), language development involves an increasing ability to incorporate and consolidate more information into a single grammatically inter-related unit—to put more chunks of information in a sentence.
Secondly, he notes that evidence has been provided (Monroe, 1975) to suggest that not only the process of T-unit lengthening, but also the stages in that process, are consistent in first and second language acquisition. In both cases sentences tend to be combined first by coordination primarily. Subordination is more heavily used at the next stage of development; and finally, sentence embedding and clause reduction become the principal means of consolidating and structuring information.

Gales' third point is that T-unit analysis also reflects the fact that the duration of the process is far shorter in adult second language acquisition than in first language acquisition. This difference generally is attributed to the fact that the adult, by definition, approaches the second language acquisition task as a cognitively mature individual, whereas in the case of first language acquisition, language development parallels cognitive and other developmental patterns.

Finally, Gales notes that errors occur in second language writing that do not occur, or occur far less frequently, in first language writing. The very development of a modified index—the mean length of error-free T-units (along with the ratio of error-free T-units to total T-units) underscores this difference (Gales, 1979, p. 9).

There has also been work on assessing the syntactic maturity of students of second languages other than English. T. Cooper (1976) analyzed samples of the free writing or college students of German to determine whether or not significant differences in the use of selected embedding transformations existed between levels, and to
test the validity of Hunt's method for measuring syntactic maturity when applied to the writing of second language learners. Monroe (1975) used a rewrite measure to measure the syntactic fluency of students at four levels of college French. Both Cooper and Monroe found significant increases between levels to be characteristic of the acquisition of written syntax in the target language (Cooper, et al, 1978, p. 7). Monroe noticed that his students used syntactic patterns of a degree of complexity comparable to that of Cooper's students. He inferred from this that foreign language learners progress through similar stages of development as they gain skill in handling the syntactic patterns of the second language (Cooper, et al, p. 7).

Cooper's earlier study (1976) was descriptive in nature, designed to determine whether or not second language learners of German at the college level revealed developmental trends toward syntactic maturity. Having established that the students in the study did, in fact show such trends, Cooper designed a subsequent study to determine whether or not sentence combining as an instructional technique would increase the rate of written syntactic development of college students of French, German, and Spanish. The results of this study seem to indicate that sentence combining facilitates achievement of a higher degree of syntactic maturity than might be normally expected (Cooper, 1981, p. 162).

The wealth of research on syntactic maturity, and the acceptance of such measurement in second language acquisition indicate that such
an evaluation is appropriate for the protocols prepared for this study.

The literature that has been discussed up to this point indicates that the written composition can reveal important information about the acquisition of a second language. The literature has revealed another type of protocol, however, that this researcher believes may add another dimension to the written one.

Thinking Aloud, and Other Verbalizing Techniques

Researchers in both native and second language composing have made use of verbalizing techniques to find out more about the thinking processes of students engaged in this activity. In her case study of the composing processes of twelfth graders, Emig (1977) asked the subjects to compose aloud and simultaneously write down short pieces on whatever subjects they wished. She found the thinking aloud technique especially helpful in capturing the composing behaviors she calls planning and writing (p. 42). She notes that in composing aloud, many kinds of hesitation behaviors intervene. The most common of these are making filler sounds, making critical comments, expressing feelings and attitudes (toward self as a writer) to the reader, engaging in digressions, either ego-enhancing or discourse related, and repeating elements. The writer's silences can be filled with writing activity, with reading, or be "seemingly" unfilled—"seemingly" because Emig says the writer may at these times be engaged in very important nonexternalized thinking and composing (p. 42).
The thinking aloud technique has been used to study the composing processes of younger subjects. Rucker (1982) compared gifted and average sixth grade students on a writing measure. Using a picture as stimulus, Rucker asked his subjects to write about it, encouraging them to compose aloud as they did so. The results of the study indicated that the composing process was essentially the same for gifted and average children.

Hosenfeld (1976) demonstrated the usefulness of verbalizing techniques in foreign language education research by focusing on the processes that students use to perform learning tasks in the target language. She developed a system that combined students' thinking aloud about the language tasks they were performing with questioning by the researcher based on the information given by the student. The latter was included to compensate for students' incomplete descriptions of learning strategies. Her thesis was that teachers and researchers could learn more about students' learning strategies by applying this technique (p. 123). Hosenfeld's study revealed a number of strategies used by students working with reading-grammar tasks (Hosenfeld, 1977).

Cohen and Hosenfeld (1981) describe the two types of activities through which one may study a mental state: thinking aloud and self observation. Thinking aloud is described as just letting the thoughts flow verbally without trying to control, direct, or observe them. Self observation may range from largely unanalyzed verbalizations to those that reflect extensive analysis, and from concrete verbalizations to those that have been transformed or coded.
In a metalanguage of technical terms (p. 286). Another dimension in gathering mentalistic data is time. Think-aloud data generally reflect present time. With regard to self-observational data, if the inspection of a mental state is immediate, it is called introspection. If observation does not take place at once, it is referred to as retrospection (p. 286). Studies by Cohen and Hosenfeld have demonstrated that thinking aloud and self observation can be useful to the researcher in coming to understand how a second language is learned, and that, in turn, insights from such mentalistic research methods can be used to help improve second language learning skills (p. 311).

The thinking-aloud technique has also been used in research on how students learn new vocabulary. VanDaalen-Kapteijn and Elshout-Mohr (1981) conducted an experiment in which subjects who were relatively high in verbal comprehension were compared to subjects relatively low in that area on learning the meaning of neologisms from series of sentences while thinking aloud. By means of this process, the researchers were able to determine that there were differences in the way the two groups use a known word meaning as a model for the neologism's meaning, and in the way they transform the sentence contents accordingly. A second experiment using the same technique also revealed that the "analytic" way in which high verbals use a model unit provides them with directions into which to transform the sentence contents, whereas the "holistic" model utilization of low verbals does not (p. 306). It was the subjects'
use of the thinking aloud technique that revealed the processes that they were using to discover the meanings of the "words".

Another verbalizing technique that has been used with some success by researchers is the interview. It has been previously mentioned that Hosenfeld combined the interview with the think-aloud technique in her research on students' language learning strategies. Naiman, et al. (1978), in their study of the good language learner, came to the conclusion that it is not possible to learn very much about students' language learning strategies or techniques by means of even strict observation in language learning classrooms. Those researchers found that, in an interview, learners are able to contribute useful information about (a) their goals in language learning; (b) classroom activities and learning techniques; and (c) teacher-student interaction (p. 100).

Zamel (1983) used the interview in preference to the think-aloud technique in her study of the composing processes of advanced ESL students. Her research into procedure suggested that composing aloud possibly changes the process, or perhaps interferes with their normal composing process (p. 169). Zamel found that the way the students characterized the overall process in the interviews was an accurate verbal representation of what they did when they wrote (p. 178).

The results obtained by these researchers have convinced this writer that more can be learned from this study by including as a component an opportunity for students to verbalize about their writing.
CHAPTER III
PROCEDURES

Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the writing strategies of good second language learners. When proficient second language learners are asked to write a composition in the target language when given a picture as stimulus:

1. What strategies will the subjects employ in writing the composition?

2. Will there be differences between the strategies used by the proficient second language learners identified as gifted, and by those not so identified?

3. Will there be differences between the compositions written by the proficient second language learners identified as gifted and those not so identified?

4. If differences are discovered between the compositions of the two groups of proficient second language learners, what are those differences?

5. What kinds of differences will be observed between the two groups of proficient second language learners in the way in which they verbalize while thinking aloud as they compose?

Subjects

The location chosen for this study was Columbus and surrounding towns because they were accessible to the researcher, and because these areas had ongoing programs for gifted students. The researcher
wanted to draw subjects from several schools in order to include students with different types of backgrounds, in different types of language programs. It was found in surveying the gifted programs in the area that only two school systems provided for gifted students at the high school level. The Identification of gifted students takes place in the elementary grades, and most gifted programs are implemented at that level. In order to have a variety of students for the study, then, it was necessary to accept as subjects some high school and junior high school students who had been identified as gifted at the elementary level.

Each school system has its own procedures for identifying gifted students. In each case, students may be identified by means of one or several methods. The following chart shows the types of identification procedures employed by the schools used in this study. An "X" in one of the columns indicates that this procedure is one of those used by the school listed at the left.

GIFTED IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN THE STUDY

<table>
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<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Group IQ Test</th>
<th>Cognitive Abilities Test</th>
<th>Achievement Test</th>
<th>Classroom SAT Performance</th>
<th>Teacher Nomination</th>
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The students participating in the study would be enrolled in French and Spanish, the languages taught by the researcher. It was decided to use students in the second and third year of language study because the researcher wanted the students to have language skills beyond those usually acquired in the first year. Another factor in this decision was that gifted students in the eleventh or twelfth grades are often seriously pursuing their major interests, and are unable or do not choose to study a foreign language beyond the second or third year.

In the two high schools with gifted programs, the foreign language chairpersons located the subjects and screened them for identification of giftedness. In the schools without gifted programs, however, a different procedure had to be followed. In the third high school, the chairperson asked the French and Spanish teachers who taught level II and level III classes to submit to him a list of the names of their best students. The researcher followed the same procedure with the individual teachers in the fourth high school and in the two junior high schools. Then, with the help of the gifted coordinators in the systems involved, the researcher identified those students who had participated in gifted programs at the elementary school level.

In five of the schools the researcher was able to locate proficient language learners, some of whom had been identified as gifted, and others not so identified. In the sixth school, however, there were no students identified as gifted enrolled in the second level of the modern language classes, and there were no third year
classes. Because of the inability to obtain subjects from both groups, the researcher decided to use this school for a pilot study in order to test the instrument and procedures.

Below is a chart showing the students who participated in the study by language (F or S), level (2 or 3), and identification (N = not identified gifted; G = identified gifted):

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<th>STUDENTS BY LANGUAGE, LEVEL, AND IDENTIFICATION</th>
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The researcher planned to have the same number of subjects at each language level, and an equal number of proficient students identified as gifted and of proficient students not so identified. There were, however, cases where students who had agreed to take part in the study did not appear at the appointed time. In one case, the classroom teacher made a substitution for a student originally scheduled for the study. The substitute produced very interesting
protocols, but could not, for various reasons, be included among the subjects on the chart above. His protocols will be discussed separately in chapter four. The total number of proficient second language students participating in the study was 49, 26 identified as gifted, and 23 not so identified.

Since the students were to "think aloud" as they wrote the composition, a place was needed where the test could take place with some degree of privacy. In each school such a place was located.

THE INSTRUMENT

The researcher decided to use a picture as a stimulus for writing the composition to provide the students with some ideas about which to write, and to standardize the content of the composition to some degree. The students were instructed to write in the target language a composition based on the picture in some way. They were asked to think aloud about the composition as they wrote.

A picture was needed that would provide a scope of ideas and vocabulary within the normal range for most students who had completed two years or more of French or Spanish. The picture should also allow for students who might wish to write creatively. Being unable to find such a picture, the researcher asked a colleague skilled in cartooning to draw a picture to her specifications. A copy of the result is in the appendix.

A small portable cassette recorder was used for taping the students as they talked aloud while writing. The machine was convenient for carrying from school to school, and also relatively
unobtrusive, providing as little distraction as possible for the subjects.

Hosenfeld (1977), in order to be sure that the subjects in her study could indeed talk about the reading-grammar exercises they were doing, and thereby reveal strategies for doing them, provided her subjects with brief practice exercises before beginning the study. Following Hosenfeld's procedure, the researcher developed a short set of questions as a warm-up, and chose some simple pictures for the students to practice talking about in the target language.

**PILOT STUDY**

As has been stated previously, in one of the schools chosen for the study there were no students identified as gifted enrolled in the modern language classes at level II, and there were no level III classes. The researcher decided to use this school as a pilot study to try out the instrument and procedures. Five of the students selected by the teachers as proficient language learners agreed to take part in the study—three enrolled in French and two in Spanish. Working with each student separately, the researcher began with the practice exercises. One of the benefits of those exercises soon became apparent. Students who were nervous about participating in the study became more relaxed. When the exercises were completed, and the student had demonstrated that s/he understood what s/he was to do, the researcher provided paper and writing implement (if needed), and showed the picture to the student. S/He was instructed to write in the target language a short composition based on the
picture in some way, thinking aloud about the composition as s/he wrote. The tape recorder was turned on when the student began writing.

The pilot study revealed several things:

1. The subjects asked the researcher for help with vocabulary and structures.

2. The subjects asked the researcher about items in the picture.

3. Subjects varied greatly in their ability to think aloud as they wrote. One found it difficult; two were able to do it adequately; two were able to talk very fluently while composing.

4. In general, the thinking aloud process of these students was characterized by the same elements described by Emlg (1977) listed in chapter two of this paper.

5. Level II French and Spanish students have had very little opportunity to write beyond the word or sentence level in their language classes. In spite of this fact, and probably because they are good language students, many were able to write a paragraph or paragraphs in the target language.

6. The length of the compositions varied greatly. In the pilot study the shortest composition was 65 words, the longest, 339. Since all of these students were in level II, and all had had the same teachers (there was only one French teacher and one Spanish teacher in the school), this finding suggests that length of composition is not necessarily a function of giftedness (none of those students was identified as gifted), level of study, or the types of activities provided in their language classes.

7. Subjects varied in the kind of language they used in thinking aloud:

1. They spoke mainly in the target language.

2. They spoke mainly in English.

3. They used both languages throughout.
As a result of the pilot study, several decisions were made about how the study would be conducted. Since the researcher wanted to find out how each student would approach and solve the problem of composing in the target language, she decided that the directions for writing the composition must not bias the students toward any particular type of writing. Also, because one of the objectives of the study was to determine what strategies students used to write a composition in the target language, the researcher decided that she must not give the students any help in selecting vocabulary or grammatical items. Therefore, during the time that the writing was taking place, the researcher would limit responses to students' questions to those that did not give students help in finding specific words or structures.

The pilot study confirmed that students could perform the task assigned to them, and validated the content of the picture as being within the capability of level II Spanish and French students.

PROCEDURES

Over a period of two months in the Spring of 1983, the researcher visited the schools chosen for the study and obtained, in the manner described previously, the names of outstanding students in levels II and III of French and Spanish. A standard release granting permission to participate in the study was required for each participant. Each subject was tested individually in the location provided by the school in which the study was taking place.
After completing the practice activities, the student was shown the picture and asked to write, in the target language, a composition based on the picture in some way. As s/he wrote, the student was to think aloud about what s/he was writing. When the student was ready to begin, the researcher turned on the tape recorder. No time limit was set, and each student approached the writing in his/her own way. If the student was silent for a long period of time, the researcher asked what s/he was thinking. This was done in an attempt to find out what problem the student was trying to solve at that moment. The student indicated to the researcher when s/he had finished writing.

EVALUATION OF THE WRITTEN PROTOCOLS

The compositions were scored using three methods of evaluation:

1. Syntactic maturity
2. Arrangement of items from the picture
3. Holistic ratings by the researcher and four other disinterested readers.

Syntactic Maturity

Hunt (1967) found three measures to be most significant in determining syntactic maturity:

1. Clause length (especially in skilled adults)
2. T-unit length (especially for students grades 4-12)
3. Clauses per T-unit (especially for students below grade twelve).

Gales (1976) found Hunt's measures to be significant in determining the language proficiency of ESL students. Cooper (1981)
and Monroe (1975) used all three measures in evaluating the syntactic maturity of German and French students. Since the measures of Clause length, T-unit length, and Clauses per T-unit have been found significant in evaluating syntactic maturity in the native language (Hunt, 1978), English as a second language, and French, German and Spanish as a second language (Cooper, 1981), this researcher considers them appropriate for use in determining the syntactic maturity of the compositions written for this study.

Arrangement of Items in the Compositions

King and Rentel (1981) note that students differ in the manner in which they organize their compositions. Rentel (1983) suggested that the results of this study might show a difference between the arrangement patterns of the compositions of proficient language students identified as gifted and those proficient language students not so identified. He indicated that students frequently arrange compositions in additive, spatial, or temporal patterns. An examination of the written protocols produced in this study revealed the patterns suggested by Rentel, with some variations. These patterns are listed below, in order by level of sophistication:

1. Random additive—students have added to the composition items of information from the picture in an apparently random pattern.

2. Elaborated additive—students have added to the composition information from the picture, and have elaborated on the information in some way before proceeding to another item.

3. Spatial—students have organized the information according to the way items in the picture are related to each other spatially.
4. Temporal—students have organized the information according to when in time they perceived it to take place.

5. Story format—students have written a story about the picture, or about something in the picture.

6. Organizer—students have used some type of organizer to introduce the composition. It might be a title and/or a lead-in sentence. This category appears in addition to the first four. For example, a composition could be written with spatial arrangement with or without an organizer.

**Holistic Ratings**

This researcher wished to obtain, in addition to the measure of syntactic maturity and the type of arrangement pattern, an evaluation of the paper as a whole—one that would include a qualitative dimension. Rentel (1983) suggested that the researcher consider implementing a modified form of the system of composition rating developed by Diederich.

Diederich (1974), having found the detailed marking of compositions to be laborious and not very helpful to the student, devised a procedure whereby a team of teachers could rate compositions by means of an overall impression of the writing. This type of evaluation, referred to as holistic scoring, requires that the raters agree to follow the guidelines for the levels of scoring, and that they be trained to use the system. An example of a Diederich Scale appears below. The guidelines for the levels is found in the appendix.
### A RATING SHEET FOR A DIEDERICH SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>Paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>MIDDLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wording</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handwriting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Diederich scale was designed for use in rating compositions written in English by native speakers of that language. Since the compositions produced for this study were written in a second language, by students who were not very far advanced in language study, it was necessary for this researcher to modify the original scale. The modified scale follows. The guidelines for the levels on the rating sheet appear in the appendix.
Disinterested foreign language professionals, four in Spanish and four in French, were asked to read and rate the protocols. The papers were numbered from 1 to 49 and photocopied with no other distinguishing mark showing. After the readers were trained in the use of the above scale, they rated the papers individually and returned them to the researcher.
EVALUATION OF THE TAPE PROTOCOLS

The taped protocols were analyzed first of all to determine what kind of language the students used to think aloud. The pilot study produced taped protocols verbalized in the following manners:

1. Mainly in the target language
2. Mainly in the native language
3. Both languages mixed throughout.

The protocols resulting from the study were analyzed to determine how they fit the above categories, and any others that emerged from the study. Then they were examined to determine whether or not there seemed to be a difference between the way students identified as gifted and students not so identified verbalized when thinking aloud.

The taped protocols revealed several kinds of strategies the students used in completing the task of writing a composition. The more illuminating and interesting strategies will be discussed in chapter four, and portions of the scripts will be reproduced. As with the type of language used, the types of strategies were examined to try to determine whether or not there was a difference between those used by proficient second language students identified as gifted, and by those not so identified.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to test proficient second language learners on a measure of written composition to find out if differences would be revealed between the proficient language learners identified as academically gifted and those not identified as gifted on two aspects of their performance:

1. The written protocols
2. Taped protocols of the students thinking aloud as they wrote the compositions.

The written protocols were evaluated by the following means:

1. Arrangement of the content of the compositions
2. Three measures of syntactic maturity
3. Holistic ratings by the researcher and four other readers.

The taped protocols were analyzed and discussed in terms of the following areas:

1. Differences in the way students verbalized while writing the compositions, and
2. Differences in the strategies employed by the students in writing the compositions as revealed by the taped protocols.
THE WRITTEN PROTOCOLS

Arrangement of The Content of the Compositions

It was recommended by Rentel (1983) that the compositions be examined to determine how the content was organized, and then studied to see if differences could be detected between the arrangement patterns of the compositions written by students identified as gifted, and by those not so identified. After studying the 49 compositions, 21 in Spanish and 28 in French, the following patterns of arrangement of content emerged:

(Note: The abbreviations for each pattern will appear on the tables.)

1. Random additive (RA): The subject wrote down items observed in the picture in an apparently random pattern.

2. Elaborated additive (EA): The subject wrote down items observed in the picture and elaborated on them in some way before going on to other items.

3. Spatial (SP): The subject arranged the items observed in the picture according to the way in which they relate to each other spatially in the picture.

4. Temporal (T): The subject perceived the items in the picture as events occurring during a period of time.

5. Story format (ST): The subject composed a story about the picture, or about one or more items in the picture.

6. Organizer (O): The subject introduced the composition with an organizer, such as a title and/or a lead-in sentence. This category appears in conjunction with categories one through four. For example, in the tables the abbreviation RA/O means that the material was arranged in a random additive pattern with an organizer at the beginning of the piece.

The arrangement patterns for the combined French and Spanish protocols are shown in Table 4-1.
ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS FOR FRENCH AND SPANISH COMPOSITIONS
BY STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS GIFTED (G)
AND BY THOSE NOT SO IDENTIFIED (N)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS</th>
<th>RA</th>
<th>RA/O</th>
<th>EA</th>
<th>EA/O</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>SP/O</th>
<th>T/O</th>
<th>ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDENTIFICATION</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>G</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-1

Table 4-1 shows that the largest percentage of the subjects in both the gifted and non-gifted groups wrote papers with the content arranged in a random additive pattern, with or without organizer. Fifty-nine percent of the total number of subjects arranged their compositions in those patterns. Of that number, 23% were identified as gifted, and 35% were not so identified. Looking at the figures another way, 46% of the students identified as gifted wrote using random additive patterns compared to 74% of the students not so identified. These figures suggest that the random additive pattern was the easiest to follow under the circumstances, and that students not identified as gifted were more likely to write in a random arrangement pattern than students identified as gifted.

The pattern followed by the second greatest number of students in both the gifted and non-gifted groups is the combined spatial and spatial with organizer arrangement. Twenty-three percent of the gifted students and 13% of the non-gifted students wrote compositions in those patterns. None of the subjects not identified as gifted
wrote using the elaborated additive arrangement with an organizer, and only 9% of that group wrote using the arrangement patterns of the last two categories listed in Table 4-1.

Overall, a larger percentage of gifted students wrote compositions arranged in patterns other than random additive or random additive with organizer—54% of that group compared with 26% of the non-gifted group. These figures suggest that gifted students may prefer writing compositions in more sophisticated arrangement patterns.

Because both level II and level III students participated in the study, this researcher decided that it was necessary to look at the figures broken down by levels. It was possible that there might be a difference in the level III students' ability to arrange and organize compositions because of the advantage of having had an additional year of language study. Table 4-2 shows the arrangement patterns by identification and level.

### ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS OF COMPOSITIONS BY LEVELS (2, 3) AND BY IDENTIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS</th>
<th>RA</th>
<th>RA/O</th>
<th>EA</th>
<th>EA/O</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>SP/O</th>
<th>T/O</th>
<th>ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levels</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifted</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Gifted</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2
Thirty-one level II students and eighteen level III students participated in the study. A comparison of the arrangement patterns of the compositions by levels shows that the largest single arrangement category for level II is the random additive pattern. Thirty-nine percent of the level II students wrote using this pattern, and 74% of that group used the combined random additive categories. The level III group, however, has as its largest single writing category the spatial with organizer—33% of the level III students wrote using that pattern. The second largest category for both level II and level III is the random additive with organizer. None of the level III students used the elaborated additive or elaborated additive with organizer patterns. It is interesting to note that 10% of the level II students wrote in story format compared to 5% of level III. In the latter category, the level II students were identified as gifted, while the level III was not so identified.

Looking across levels and identification, one also notes that of the eight level III students identified as gifted 88% wrote using the spatial, spatial with organizer, and temporal with organizer patterns, and only 12% wrote using the random additive pattern. Of the ten level III students not identified as gifted, however, 50% arranged their compositions in the last four types of patterns.

In level II the number of identified gifted was greater, as was the spread across arrangement patterns. No gifted level II student wrote using the spatial or the temporal with organizer patterns. The largest and second largest percentage of the gifted and the non-gifted level II students used the random additive and random
additive with organizer patterns. Out of 13 level II students not identified as gifted, 92% wrote using those patterns.

When considering the figures by levels it is clear that more level II students wrote compositions using the random additive patterns than did level III students. When identification is considered, however, it becomes apparent that gifted students used these patterns less frequently than non-gifted students. Level III students wrote compositions using those patterns less frequently than level II students across the board. This suggests, then, that the level of language does not indeed affect the sophistication of the arrangement patterns in the compositions.

In order to determine whether or not there was a difference between Spanish students and French students in the choice of arrangement pattern, Table 4-3 has been prepared showing the patterns by language and by Identification

| ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS OF COMPOSITIONS BY LANGUAGES AND BY IDENTIFICATION (G, N) |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS                        | RA    | RA/O  | EA    | EA/O  | SP    | SP/O  | T/O   | ST    |       |       |       |       |       |
| IDENTIFICATION                               | G     | N     | G     | N     | G     | N     | G     | N     | G     | N     | G     | N     | TOTA LS |
| SPANISH                                      | 4     | 3     | 2     | 4     | 1     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 1     | 2     | 0      | 21     |
| FRENCH                                       | 2     | 5     | 4     | 5     | 0     | 0     | 2     | 0     | 1     | 4     | 1     | 2     | 0      | 11     | 28     |

Table 4-3
Of the 21 Spanish compositions in the study, 33% were arranged in the random additive pattern, and 62% in the combined random additive patterns. 32% of the 28 French compositions were arranged in the random additive with organizer pattern, 57% in the combined random additive patterns. The remainder of the Spanish compositions (38%) are spread over the remaining categories except for the elaborated additive with organizer, a pattern not used by any Spanish student. Of the remaining 43% of the French compositions, 18% were arranged in the spatial with organizer pattern. The rest of the papers are spread over the remaining categories except for the elaborated additive, which was not used by any French student.

Eleven of the Spanish students were identified as gifted, 59% of whom wrote in the combined random additive patterns. Both of the Spanish students who wrote stories were identified as gifted. Of the 15 French students identified as gifted, 40% wrote using the combined random additive patterns. In the French group, however, the same percentage of students used the random additive with organizer and the spatial with organizer patterns—27% each. Only 13% of the gifted French students wrote in the random additive pattern. In other words, a larger percentage of Spanish gifted than French gifted students wrote compositions using the random additive pattern.

Seventy percent of the ten Spanish students not identified as gifted wrote compositions arranged in the combined random additive patterns. Seventy-seven percent of the 13 French students not identified as gifted wrote in those patterns. These figures suggest that in both languages non-gifted students may be more inclined than
gifted students to write compositions using a random arrangement pattern, given circumstances similar to those of this study.

Table 4-4, arranged by identification, level and language, reveals several tendencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS BY IDENTIFICATION, LEVEL (2, 3) AND LANGUAGE (S, F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARRANGEMENT PATTERNS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIFTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIFTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-4

Fifty-four percent of the compositions written by students identified as gifted were arranged in a manner other than adding items in a random pattern. Only 26% of the students not identified as gifted arranged their compositions in patterns other than random additive. When the figures are arranged by level, it is apparent that more of the students in level II used the random additive patterns. The largest single category for level III, however, is the spatial with organizer. The next largest category at the level is
the random additive with organizer, followed by the temporal with organizer. The highest percentage of gifted students in level III wrote in the latter two categories. The highest percentage of students overall, however, wrote in the combined random additive categories.

It is obvious that the easiest way to address the task of writing the composition was to describe the picture. Students tended to choose items from the picture that they knew how to say in the target language and wrote sentences about them. That more of the students writing in the random additive patterns were in level II than in level III is not surprising, because level II students have generally had very little experience with free writing in the target language. They also have studied the language one year less, and, therefore, have a smaller vocabulary and a simpler concept of sentence structure than the level III students.

Several possibilities are suggested by the fact that fourteen gifted students compared with six non-gifted students wrote in other than random additive patterns. First of all, the level of language of the students must be considered. Seven of the fourteen gifted students and five of the six non-gifted students were in level III. This fact indicates that students in level III are better prepared to write free compositions than students in level II, something that foreign language educators will not find surprising. A question that does arise, however, is why, given the fact that level III students have more experience writing in the target language, and that the students in this study are all proficient second language students,
so few of the non-gifted level III students wrote in more sophisticated arrangement patterns.

Seven of the gifted students and one of the non-gifted students who used more sophisticated arrangement patterns were in level II. It is likely that gifted students grasp the elements of syntax more readily than non-gifted students, and are therefore ready and willing to write in more sophisticated patterns even though they have not had formal classroom practice in doing so. Risk taking is a characteristic that gifted children may possess. The seven level II gifted students may have been willing to risk making mistakes in order to write their compositions in more sophisticated arrangement patterns.

If the above statements are true, one might question why only seven of the eighteen gifted level II students wrote in the more sophisticated arrangement patterns. One reason may be the level II student's lack of writing experience in the target language. A second possibility is that, while risk taking is a characteristic that gifted children may exhibit, all gifted students are not risk takers. Some would rather restrict their writing than chance making mistakes. A third reason may be that gifted children are often very task-oriented. They assess a task, complete it to a minimum standard, and feeling no need to enhance the product further, move on to the next task. It is possible that many of the gifted students in this study perceived the assigned task as one of describing a picture. They did this to the best of their ability, and considered the work completed.
Being task-oriented may also explain why only three of the gifted students wrote stories about the picture. Another reason for this may be, however, that general giftedness does not also imply specific giftedness in creative writing. A student may be gifted in mathematics or the sciences, and may find fiction of any kind uninteresting. It might not occur to this student to read a story, much less write one. Getzels and Jackson (1962) noted that creativity is not limited to artistic creativity, but is a way of thinking involving discovering and producing original ideas. A student may possess the quality of creativity to varying degrees, but there are many different ways that this creativity can be manifested.

**Syntactic Maturity**

The compositions were evaluated on three measures of syntactic maturity: T-unit length (words per T-unit), clause length (words per clause), and clauses per T-unit. Because of the differences between the two languages, the results of the measures of syntactic maturity were tabulated separately for French and Spanish. Tables 4-6 through 4-11 show the scores on the measures of syntactic maturity for the written protocols. The scores are arranged from highest to lowest on the tables for ease in comparing them.

In comparing the tables across languages and measures, one sees that few papers have the same rank on all three measures. The papers with the highest and lowest scores on both T-unit length and clauses per T-unit are the same, however—Spanish papers number 10 and 21 respectively being the highest for gifted and non-gifted students,
and papers 20 and 19 the lowest for those groups, and papers number 24 and 44 and 47 and 22 respectively occupying the same positions for the French papers. Generally, though, the ranks of the papers vary across measures.

Since syntactic maturity correlates with age, both chronological and mental, there may be a good reason for the variance in scores. Hunt (1966) finds the most valid measure of syntactic maturity for students up to grade 12 to be T-unit length, and for students above grade 12 and adults, clause length. The students who participated in the students by grade and language is shown below.

### STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY
### BY LANGUAGE AND BY GRADE LEVEL (9, 10, 11, 12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SPANISH</th>
<th></th>
<th>FRENCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grado</td>
<td>No. of Students</td>
<td>Grado</td>
<td>No. of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-5

The table shows that a greater number of the Spanish students (67%) are in the ninth and tenth grades. This indicates that the Spanish subjects as a group are in the age bracket for which Hunt considers T-unit length the more valid measure of syntactic maturity. The French group as a whole is even younger than the Spanish—71% are
In the ninth and tenth grades. In spite of the similarity in overall age, however, there are some differences in the figures for the French and Spanish group that should be considered.

First, the scores on T-unit length will be discussed, since it is that measure that Hunt believes to be most valid for measuring the syntactic maturity of high school students up to grade twelve.

### T-UNIT LENGTH BY IDENTIFICATION AND LEVEL

**Spanish Compositions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Identified As Gifted</th>
<th>Students Not Identified As Gifted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper No.</td>
<td>Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DINFERENCE BETWEEN MEANS .2132**

Table 4-6
T-UNIT LENGTH BY IDENTIFICATION AND LEVEL
French Compositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS GIFTED</th>
<th>STUDENTS NOT IDENTIFIED AS GIFTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper No.</td>
<td>Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEANS: .9071

Table 4-7

The difference between the means of the Spanish students identified as gifted and those not so identified seems small -- .2132 in favor of the gifted group. In looking at the distribution of scores, one sees that, although the two highest scores are on papers written by level III students identified as gifted, the scores in general run from high to low across the two groups. The French scores, however, show a different trend. First of all, the difference between the group means is larger than that for the
Spanish papers—.9071 in favor of the gifted group. An examination of the distribution of the scores for the gifted students reveals a definite pattern. Except for paper number 43 (which will be discussed later), the highest scores for that group appear on compositions written by level III students. This is not the case for the students not identified as gifted, as papers by level III students appear at the high, middle and low positions in the distribution. A third difference from the Spanish compositions is that, although the second highest score is on a paper written by a non-gifted student, most of the high scores were made by students identified as gifted. More will be said about these differences as other measures are discussed.

Hunt considers clause length the most valid measure of syntactic maturity for students from grade twelve and beyond, and for adults. Since Hunt's study of the syntactic maturity of average and superior students indicated that mental age must be considered as well as chronological age, it seemed appropriate to measure the protocols of the subjects in this study for clause length as well as for T-unit length.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.6666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.2857</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.2500</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.2105</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.0000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.0909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.7777</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.9473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.7179</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.4705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.0000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.9090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.3076</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 63.6487  **MEAN** 5.7862  **DIFFERENCE IN MEANS** .0007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>MEAN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>57.8558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-8
### Table 4-9

As in the case of T-unit length, the difference in group means for the Spanish papers was very small—.0007 in favor of the gifted group. The scores are distributed fairly evenly across groups and levels. The French scores, as before, show a measurable difference between groups—.8540 in favor of the gifted students. The scores for the students identified as gifted show a trend similar to those on the measure of T-unit length. Except for the highest score, which is a level II paper (number 43), the highest scores for students
Identified as gifted are from the level III students, although the order is slightly rearranged. This is not true for the non-gifted group—the scores are in a completely different order from their position on the measure of T-unit length, and the level III papers fall in the high middle and the bottom range.

Several factors may be influencing the trends observed in the scores on the measures of T-unit length and clause length. Hunt's (1967) studies with superior and average students indicate that superior students score higher than average students on those two measures. The fact that the same French students scored highest on both T-unit length and clause length, although in a different order, strongly suggests that what happened in Hunt's study is operating here. A closer look at the distribution of Spanish scores for students identified as gifted reveals a similar, though not so strong, trend. Papers number 2, 16, 18, and 13 are among the highest scoring on both T-unit length and clause length.

Another contributing factor may be the fact that there are five level III students identified as gifted among the French subjects, and only three among the Spanish. All of the compositions written by level III students are among the highest papers in the gifted group. In the Spanish group, two of the level III students identified as gifted scored high on both measures. Being gifted implies having a greater mental age than one's peers. Level III students identified as gifted would have an advantage of both higher chronological age and mental age, as well as one more year of language study, over most level II students. The five students in question represent all three
high schools, with proportionately more from school A, since more level III students from school A participated in the study. Since there can be no teacher or program influence on the results, one other possibility occurs to this researcher. Since syntactic maturity measures students' ability to combine increasingly larger amounts of information into a sentence, it is possible that the nature of the type of materials and activities used in level III French classes promotes this skill to a greater degree than those used at that level in Spanish classes.

The third measure of syntactic maturity to be discussed is clauses per T-unit, or what Hunt calls the Subordinate Clause Index.

### CLAUSES PER T-UNIT BY IDENTIFICATION AND LEVEL

#### Spanish Compositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Clauses per T-Unit</th>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Clauses per T-Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.6000</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3333</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.2222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2187</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1666</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.0909</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>12.9085</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11.3556</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEAN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1.1735</strong></td>
<td><strong>MEAN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1.1355</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GROUP MEANS:** .0380

Table 4-10
Hunt found this index to be the most valid as a measure of the syntactic maturity of younger students. It was thought to be an appropriate measure for this study because, although the students were older, they were in the early stages of acquiring a second language. The results do not parallel exactly those obtained on the other two measures. The difference between means on the Spanish papers again appears very small—.0380—and is in favor of the group identified as gifted. In looking at the distribution of scores, one
finds a few that appear in a similar position on the other measures. Three of the five highest scores in the gifted group are also three of the five highest on the measure of T-unit length. Only paper 18 also appears among the five highest scores on the measure of clause length. It is interesting to note that paper number 3, the third level III paper that occupied a position at or near the bottom of the distribution on the other two measures, is near the top in clauses per T-unit. For scores of students not identified as gifted, three of those who have the highest scores in clauses per T-unit are also among the five highest scores on T-unit length. Two of those papers are also among the five highest on clause length.

The French scores show a difference in mean of .0357 in favor of the students not identified as gifted. Since the two highest scores in the entire distribution were made by students in this group, that difference is not surprising. In the group of students identified as gifted, four of the papers scoring the highest on clauses per T-unit also scored highest on T-unit length and clause length: papers number 25, 30, 37 and 29 (all level III). In the non-gifted group only two of the highest scoring papers are also high scorers on both of the other measures: papers number 44 and 49 (one level II, one level III). Two others, number 36 (level III) and number 28 (level II) also scored high for the group on T-unit length.

To summarize the results of the measures of syntactic maturity it is necessary to look at the scores across level and identification. The six or seven highest scores in each category (selected where there was a natural break in scores) are listed for each measure.
### THE SIX HIGHEST SCORES IN CLAUSE LENGTH
#### BY LEVEL AND IDENTIFICATION
#### Spanish Compositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER NO.</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>IDENTIFICATION (G.N)</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>7.5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>7.2857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6.6666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6.4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6.2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6.2105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-12

A look at the highest Spanish scores confirms that more of the higher scores were made by students identified as gifted. An equal number of the higher scores were made by level 3 and level 2 students. Following is a table of the seven highest scores on the measure of T-unit length.

### THE SEVEN HIGHEST SCORES IN T-UNIT LENGTH
#### BY LEVEL AND IDENTIFICATION
#### Spanish Compositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER NO.</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>IDENTIFICATION (G.N)</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>9.6666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>8.1818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7.7500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>7.2850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7.1666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6.9687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6.9333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-13
Again, more of the higher scoring papers were written by students identified as gifted. The top three scores are on level III papers, and the rest are level II. Now let us consider the seven highest scores on the measure of clauses per T-unit.

THE SEVEN HIGHEST SCORES IN CLAUSES PER T-UNIT
BY LEVEL AND IDENTIFICATION (G, N)
Spanish Compositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER NO.</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>IDENTIFICATION (G, N)</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1.4166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1.3076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1.2222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.2187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-14

This measure shows a slightly higher number of students identified as gifted among the higher scores, but the scores alternate in the distribution. There is also a slightly higher number of level III students in the distribution.

Looking at the French scores in this manner, the first to be considered is the six highest scores on Clause length.
As noted previously, the highest scores on the French compositions for the measure of clause length were made by students identified as gifted, and all but two of the scores by students in level III. The sixth score in the distribution was made by a level II student not identified as gifted. The seven highest scores on the measure of T-unit length show a similar distribution.

### Table 4-16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER NO.</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>IDENTIFICATION (G, N)</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>14.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>12.6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>10.2142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>9.6666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>8.7000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>8.6360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>8.6000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As previously noted, the largest proportion of the highest French scores on the measure of T-unit length were made by students identified as gifted, and by students in level III. Except for the last paper in the distribution, these are the same compositions that scored highest in clause length. Considering the measure of clauses per T-unit, the eight highest scores are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER NO.</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>IDENTIFICATION (G, N)</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>2.2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.4545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.3636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>1.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1.3333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-17

The distribution of these scores shows an even number of students identified as gifted, and those not so identified. The top two scores were made by students in the latter group. More level III than level II students scored high on this measure. Hunt (1967) found that his superior twelfth graders wrote fewer subordinate clauses than the average twelfth graders, and that, in general, there was no difference on this measure between average twelfth graders and skilled adults. As a result, he believes that the tendency to write
subordinate clauses peaks somewhere during the latter years of high school, and that this index is less accurate for measuring syntactic maturity for older students. The mixed results of the measure of clauses per T-unit on this study may be reflecting what Hunt found in his research.

Looking at the highest scores on the measures of syntactic maturity for both languages, one could say that generally the results are consistent with those obtained by Hunt on writing in the native language, and Monroe on writing in the second language. Hunt (1967) found that, as students mature, they progress from lengthening sentences by coordination, to doing so by subordination, and, finally by incorporating information into structures that are less than a clause. Monroe's (1975) studies of the syntactic maturity of college French students showed that second language students undergo the same sort of syntactic progression as they pursue the study of the language. Hunt's and Monroe's findings lead one to expect that, in this study, the gifted level III students would score highest on syntactic maturity, since they are theoretically chronologically and mentally older than the students in level II, and have studied the language for one year longer. From there one might expect the non-gifted level III students and the gifted level II students to score in the middle of the distribution, and the non-gifted level II students to be at the bottom. As stated above, the highest scores, with a few exceptions, meet these expectations.

When one looks at all of the scores, however, one finds the results to be less definitive. In both languages there are cases
where gifted and non-gifted level III and gifted level II students have scored at or near the bottom of the distribution. One might question why such results were obtained.

First, the chronological age range of the students in the study was from 13 to 18 years. This means that some students may still be developing in syntactic maturity in the native language as well as in the second language. Besides chronological age, mental age must be considered, since some of the students in the study are gifted. Hunt (1967) discovered that superior students scored higher on syntactic maturity than average students of the same chronological age. This fact could explain why, in this study, gifted level II students sometimes outscored level III students on these measures. A third factor is the small size of the sample. Monroe warns that his rewriting test to measure syntactic maturity is only valid in ascertaining the levels of relatively large numbers of subjects, and should never be used as the only basis for evaluating an individual's writing ability. In this study, the quantity of subjects is small, and the sample is highly restricted.

Finally, as Monroe points out, syntactic maturity is only one measure of writing. Individual writing styles have great influence on the factors in the analysis. Excellent writers may write in short syntactic units as well as in long ones. The relationship between the scores of syntactic maturity and the holistic ratings obtained on the compositions will be discussed in the next section of this paper, but it must be stated here that a number of the papers with the
highest overall ratings by independent readers scored low or relatively low on one or more measures of syntactic maturity.

**Holistic Scoring**

The third type of evaluation for the written compositions is a holistic scoring by the researcher and four other readers. The objective of using this type of evaluation was to solicit the opinion of disinterested foreign language professionals in rating the compositions. An effort was made to determine for each language the compositions with the highest scores across raters, and those with the lowest scores.

The protocols were rated according to the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage (General grammar/syntax)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of Ideas</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Ideas</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptiveness (Elaboration)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 60

Looking at the Spanish scores, the researcher and four raters chose the following papers as the six highest out of twenty-one. They are listed by paper number, level, identification, arrangement, and measures of syntactic maturity.
SIX HIGHEST SCORING SPANISH COMPOSITIONS BY RATERS
BY LEVEL, IDENTIFICATION, ARRANGEMENT, T-UNIT LENGTH,
CLAUSE LENGTH, AND CLAUSES PER T-UNIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Ident.</th>
<th>T-Unit Length</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
<th>Clauses per T-U</th>
<th>Arr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>8.1818</td>
<td>7.5000</td>
<td>1.0909</td>
<td>SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6.0000</td>
<td>4.9090</td>
<td>1.2222</td>
<td>T/O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6.2105</td>
<td>6.2105</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6.9687</td>
<td>5.7179</td>
<td>1.2187</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>9.6666</td>
<td>6.0000</td>
<td>1.6000</td>
<td>SP/O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6.8000</td>
<td>5.1000</td>
<td>1.3333</td>
<td>EA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-18

All of those compositions except paper number 4 were written by
students identified as gifted. Level was not a factor in the raters'
choices, since three were level II and three were level III.
Although paper number 18 scored highest in mean T-unit length, and
paper number 2 scored second highest, the rest of the papers were in
the middle of the distribution for T-unit length. Therefore, T-unit
length was probably not a major factor in the choice of these papers.
Clause length is even less a factor—paper number 2 scored the
highest of the Spanish papers, but the others are in the middle of
the range. Paper number 18 scored highest in clauses per T-unit, and
paper number 12 scored second highest, but, as in the other two
measurcs, the remaining scores fall in the middle or even in the
bottom of the distribution. The factor that does coordinate with the choices, however, is arrangement pattern. All six papers were written in an arrangement pattern other than random additive. Two of the papers were stories. The arrangement of the content of the compositions may well have influenced the raters' choice of these compositions as the best ones.

Seven French compositions received the highest ratings.

SEVEN HIGHEST SCORING FRENCH COMPOSITIONS BY RATERs
BY LEVEL, IDENTIFICATION, ARRANGEMENT, T-UNIT LENGTH, Clause LENGTH, AND CLAUSES PER T-UNIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Ident.</th>
<th>Arr.</th>
<th>T-Unit Length</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
<th>Clauses per T-U</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>T/O</td>
<td>10.2142</td>
<td>8.4117</td>
<td>1.2140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>SP/O</td>
<td>8.7000</td>
<td>7.2500</td>
<td>1.2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>EA/O</td>
<td>6.7890</td>
<td>5.8636</td>
<td>1.1875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>SP/O</td>
<td>14.0000</td>
<td>8.6153</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>SP/O</td>
<td>8.5000</td>
<td>6.2631</td>
<td>1.3570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>T/O</td>
<td>8.6360</td>
<td>6.3333</td>
<td>1.3636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>EA/O</td>
<td>5.6920</td>
<td>4.6250</td>
<td>1.2300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-19

Three definite factors emerge from the figures in Table 4-19. First, all of these compositions were written by students identified as gifted. Second, all are written with arrangement patterns other than random additive. Third, five out of seven were written by
students in level III. It has already been established that the
gifted level III French students wrote in patterns other than random
additive.

The measures of syntactic maturity reveal a pattern similar to
that of the Spanish scores. The papers with the longest and third
longest T-units are among the seven with the highest ratings, but the
others all fell into the middle of the distribution. The second,
third and fourth longest in clause length are among the high scores,
with the others spread throughout the distribution. The measure of
Clauses per T-unit is the least helpful—only the third highest score
is among the highest rated papers. It has already been noted,
however, that the French papers by students not identified as gifted
received slightly higher scores overall on this measure, so it is not
surprising that this measure does not contribute to the choice in
these papers.

Some interesting trends also become apparent in studying the
lowest rated papers. The Spanish papers rated lowest by the readers
are the following:
SIX LOWEST SCORING SPANISH COMPOSITIONS BY RATERS
BY LEVEL, IDENTIFICATION, ARRANGEMENT, T-UNIT LENGTH,
CLAUSE LENGTH, AND CLAUSES PER T-UNIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Ident.</th>
<th>Acc.</th>
<th>T-Unit Length</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
<th>Clauses per T-U</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>5.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>4.5000</td>
<td>4.5000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>7.2850</td>
<td>7.2850</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>RA/O</td>
<td>6.8750</td>
<td>6.1111</td>
<td>1.1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>RA/O</td>
<td>5.8333</td>
<td>5.0000</td>
<td>1.1666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>6.6470</td>
<td>5.9473</td>
<td>1.1176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-20

The factors that the lowest papers have in common is that they are all level II, and all were written using random additive or random additive with organizer arrangement patterns. The T-unit scores are all from the middle or the bottom of the range, as are the scores for clauses per T-unit scores. Clause length scores range the same except for number 16, which had the second highest score in that category.

In French, the lowest scoring papers were the following:
SIX LOWEST SCORING FRENCH COMPOSITIONS BY RATERS
BY LEVEL, IDENTIFICATION, ARRANGEMENT, T-UNIT LENGTH,
CLAUSE LENGTH, AND CLAUSES PER T-UNIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper No.</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Ident.</th>
<th>Arr.</th>
<th>T-Unit Length</th>
<th>Clause Length</th>
<th>Clauses per T-Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>RA/O</td>
<td>5.1250</td>
<td>5.1250</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>5.8750</td>
<td>5.8750</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>5.4280</td>
<td>5.4280</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>RA/O</td>
<td>5.4285</td>
<td>5.4285</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>ST</td>
<td>9.6666</td>
<td>9.6666</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-21

The lowest French scores coordinate completely with only one category—clauses per T-unit. These papers are the lowest scoring French papers on that particular measure. On the other measures of syntactic maturity, paper number 43 has the highest clause length score, and the fourth highest T-unit score. The rest of the scores in both categories are in the lower middle portion of the distribution. Paper number 43 is also interesting because it is the only one written by a student identified as gifted that is among the lowest papers, and also the only one not in random additive arrangement, but rather, in story form. Because this paper is so atypical, the researcher believes that it should be reproduced here so that it may be examined by the reader.
Un jour, un homme faisait x une promenade avec son chien. Un autre homme a veux surpriser cet homme. Malheureusement pour le deuxième homme, un ______ a ôté à côté de le premier homme. Donc, le deuxième homme n'a pas peut surpriser le premier homme________ le deuxième homme ______ n'est pas très heureux, mais il trouve une autre homme de surpriser.

Kyle's tape is in English, indicating what he is trying to say in French. He mentions that he was not able to remember the past participle of the verb VOULOIR, revealing that he probably understands that VEUX is incorrect as he has used it. His written protocol shows that he is acquainted with the IMPARFAIT and the PASSE COMPOSE, and the fact that he used both tenses as a level II student is rather unusual in this study.

Kyle's paper keeps attracting attention because of its mean clause length score. The score was obtained because there are six clauses (although Kyle's punctuation leaves some doubt about that) and 58 words in his composition. His T-unit length score is the same as his clause length score because he did not write any subordinate clauses. Thus, Kyle's score on clause per T-unit is low.

Looking at the paper holistically, it can be determined that Kyle's chief problem is the mismatch between what he would like to say and what he is able to say in French. He was unable to solve his problems as creatively as other students who will be discussed later, so his composition lacks coherence. That is probably the main reason for its low rating by the readers.
Summary of the Results of the Holistic Scoring

The holistic ratings of the Spanish papers indicate that the greatest number of the highest scoring papers were written by students identified as gifted. Level was not a factor, since an equal number of level II and level III students wrote high scoring papers. All of the highest scoring French papers were written by gifted students, and five out of the seven were written by students in level III.

Comparing the ratings with the other two evaluations for the written protocols shows that in every case, the highest scoring papers were also written in arrangement patterns other than the combined random additive patterns. Comparison with the measures of syntactic maturity, however, produces a less definite coordination. Some of the highest rated papers also have high scores on clause length and T-unit length. This is especially true of the French papers, but more of the level III papers are in this category. Not many of the high scoring papers also scored high on clauses per T-unit.

The lowest scoring papers were also usually written in the combined random additive patterns, and all except one were written by level II students. Gifted Identification did not discriminate in the lowest scoring Spanish papers, as half of them were written by students identified as gifted, and half by non-gifted students. All of the French low scoring papers except one, however, were written by students not identified as gifted. Most of the T-unit length and clause length scores for the low rated papers are in the bottom or
the middle of the distribution. The scores for clauses per T-unit are the lowest scores in the French papers, and, except for two scores, also in the Spanish papers.

In an attempt to determine which factors had greater influence on the raters' choice of best papers, the scores for the highest and lowest scoring papers were broken down to show individual scores on the seven categories of the rating sheet. All of the categories show higher totals for the higher scoring papers, but the largest differences in scores appear in the last three categories: quality of Ideas, descriptiveness, and organization. The scores have been converted into percentages to compensate for the fact that there was one more paper among the highest scoring French papers than in the lowest scoring French papers or in either the highest or lowest Spanish papers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spanish High</th>
<th>Spanish Low</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>French High</th>
<th>French Low</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of Ideas</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Ideas</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptiveness</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-22
Looking at the differences between the high and low scoring papers, one can see that some factors did not discriminate, or discriminated very little. The categories of Spelling and Quantity of Ideas had little effect on the rankings of the Spanish papers, and very little more on the French. Correctness of usage did not affect the raters' choice a great deal. Vocabulary had slightly more influence on the total scores.

It is in Quality of Ideas that one sees the greatest difference between the highest and lowest scoring papers. This category, plus those of Descriptiveness and Organization, had the greatest influence on the rating. A high score on Descriptiveness often accompanied a high score on Quality of Ideas, so it is not surprising that this category appears with that of Quality of Ideas as one of those which had the greatest influence on the scores. The inclusion of the category of Organization seems to indicate that the raters preferred papers that had some structure.

It is interesting that the raters' best papers are those with high qualitative scores, and more sophisticated arrangement patterns, but not necessarily with the highest scores on syntactic maturity. Although a number of the highest ranking papers also had high scores on syntactic maturity, several of them received only moderately high scores or even low scores on those measures. Paper number 8, one of the highest rated Spanish papers, scored at the bottom on one of the measures of syntactic maturity. A high ranking French paper, number 41, scored among the lowest of the French papers on all three measures of syntactic maturity. Both of these papers were written
with rather short sentences, and very few subordinate clauses. They were, however, written using more sophisticated arrangement patterns, and the content was rather original. The readers rated them high on Quality of Ideas, Descriptiveness, and Organization.

All of the highest rated compositions except one were written by gifted students. This result strongly suggests that there is a difference between proficient language learners identified as gifted, and those not so identified in their ability to write compositions in the target language. One should, however, also keep in mind that there is an exception. The paper in question is number 4, a Spanish composition written by a level III student. The paper scored low on all three measures of syntactic maturity, but was written using a temporal with organizer arrangement. The readers rated it high on Quality of Ideas, Descriptiveness, and Organization—all of the elements that have made a difference in the highest and lowest ratings on the papers in this study. This exception is a reminder that the ability to write good compositions is not limited exclusively to students identified as gifted.

THE TAPE D PROTOCOLS

The taped protocols were analyzed to determine the types of verbalizing the subjects used in the think aloud process, and to identify specific strategies used by the subjects in completing the writing task.
Types of Verbalizing Used in the Think Aloud Process

The Taped protocols fall into four general types of verbalizing:

1. Students talked almost entirely in the target language. Exceptions were generally lexical items that did not come to mind when they needed them. Occasionally a student worked out a problem in English, and then went right back into the target language.

2. Students talked entirely or almost entirely in English. If they used the target language at all, it was to search for a word (i.e., "trying out" different words) or working their way through conjugating a verb form.

3. Students mixed English and the target language throughout the writing process. Some started what they were going to say in English, and then said the corresponding target language sentence as they wrote. Others performed a similar operation in a word-by-word or phrase-by-phrase fashion. A number of the students in this category digressed from the task and made extraneous remarks about the picture, their schedule, themselves, etc.

4. Several students were either unable to talk while writing, or had so much difficulty doing so that they provided very little language on the tape.

5. One student has no taped protocol because of a defective casette.

Table 4-22 shows the distribution of styles of thinking aloud by identification, language, and level.

Table 4-22 shows a number of trends. First of all, the largest number of both gifted and non-gifted (48% of gifted, 52% of non-gifted) spoke mainly in the target language. Apparently the fact that these are good language students is a more important factor in willingness to use the target language than is giftedness. The same number of Spanish and French students used mainly the target language, although some differences show in the levels.
Another interesting trend is that all of the students who were unable to think aloud, or who had great difficulty doing so, were identified as gifted. Studying the protocols of the six more closely, one finds that, although these students all had difficulty thinking aloud for this study, their reasons for doing so differed. Adrienne and Linda wrote so furiously (Emig (1977), in her study of the composing processes of twelfth graders, cites students who filled silences with "sheer scribal activity (p. 92)" that they did not want to stop long enough to talk about what they were writing. Thinking aloud was a distraction for them, something that kept them off task. Another student, Karl, was simply moving his lips as he wrote. When the researcher asked him to produce sound so that it could be recorded, he responded that he did not usually think aloud. Indeed, he managed to verbalize only a few phrases (all in French)
throughout the entire time. Still a different case was Nancy, who gave a great deal of attention to the details in the picture. After one long silence, the researcher asked her what she was thinking:

I was trying to decide if it was spring or summer.

Later, after another probe by the researcher she said:

I was just saying that the park isn't IN the city, it's just NEAR it.

Still later, trying to write about the picknickers in the picture, she admitted to being concerned about the girl's wearing a dress:

They don't usually wear dresses today--usually not to picnics and stuff.

When she focused her attention on the evil looking fellow behind the tree Nancy responded to the researcher's prodding by saying:

Now I'm trying to figure out what this guy's problem is, because he has something on the end of his nose and it looks like files, too!

Toward the end, after very slow progress she commented:

I was just thinking that this is a rather unrealistic picture--wouldn't actually happen in real life. Robbers don't wear masks like that nowadays, and you hardly EVER see a happy policeman!

The last two students in the category resembled each other in one respect. Rona was very anxious and apologetic about the brevity of her composition. A level II Spanish student, she wrote six short but almost perfect sentences. Rona appeared not to want to risk making mistakes, and so did not experiment with the language in any way. Rita, a French II student, told the researcher that there really was not much she wanted to say. Although she did not apologize for its shortness, Rita also wrote a brief composition consisting of eight
short sentences. Like Rona's, her composition is almost perfect. These two students seem to share a need to have control over the language, and a disinclination to take risks.

Only 10% of the total number of students spoke mainly in the native language on tape. Although it is certainly desirable for the students to speak in the target language, using the native language can sometimes give one a better insight into what thinking processes are going on. Debbie, a Spanish II student (non-gifted), for instance, says on tape:

Hay una banda—jugando—oh—they don't look like they're playing the kind of music any younger people would want to... (laugh)

The band in the picture is composed of a trumpet, an accordion, and a violin. In her composition Debbie wrote,

Hay una banda jugando para los adultos.

She also shows that she is somewhat concerned about the style of her composition:

I was going to say something about that guy (pointing to the runner) but I don't want to. I'm using too many -ing words.

She also voices a little criticism of the instrument when she comments toward the end of the writing:

(it is) kind of hard to use your vocabulary to the fullest extent on something like this.

Kylo, a French II student (gifted), reveals his frustration when his French vocabulary does not permit him to express what he wishes in his composition.

One day a man went for a walk with his dog (pause) Um... another man wanted to—I guess, wanted to surprise this man. Can't remember the past participle of VOULOIR...
unfortunately for the second man, um (pause) (writes) I'm not sure if this is the right word. I'm trying to say "unfortunately the second man COULD never... um."

This kind of frustration also is revealed in protocols in which the target language and native language are mixed throughout. Twenty-seven percent of the total number of protocols are in this category, 12% by students identified as gifted, and 14% by those not so identified.

The blend of languages is often very helpful in following thought patterns. Andrew (Spanish II, gifted) goes smoothly from one language to the other as he writes, permitting one to observe the unfolding of his language as he does so:

_También hay dos niños jugan al fútbol. Un chico y una chica—don't's want to use también; get boring—también hay dos novlos—on a blanket—on a towel—en una toalla—tomando algo—I think tomando's right._

In another spot he goes through similar stages:

_Hay un hombre que—smoking—fumar—que está fumando..._

_**Jeannie (Spanish II, gifted)** works her way through structures in a similar manner:_

_The robber—ladrón—mira, mira, mira, mira—mirar—would be mira, is that right? Is looking. I'll put "está mirando."_

Later she tries out a structure recently introduced in her Spanish class:

_He will rob... el ladron... let's see if I can do this. We just learned this—will probably—robar, robar, I think it's robar—robaría el hombre._

Since the future and conditional tenses in Spanish are very similar in form, they are often taught concurrently, or at least
back-to-back. One sees that Jeannie does not quite have control of the differences in form, but is very close to having it. Simply reading her composition would not necessarily show that she has chosen the wrong verb form to express what she wanted to say, but listening to the tape reveals it.

Rilla, a French II student (non-gifted), also progresses through both languages:

Beaucoup de monde—go—aller—um, il, uh alle (laugh)—(spells) v-a-s . . .

And later,

Dans, uh, the bench—la chaise—is a man, um the man, un homme—is reading—lisez—um, what ending? Lire, uh, (spells) l-i-t . . .

Rilla's sense of humor shows when she catches herself using the wrong word:

He is wearing—il apporte, um, un château—(laugh)—not right—need the word—a castle! (laugh) Um, chapEAUI

Zemel (1983) in studying the composing processes of advanced ESL students, noted that the incorrect forms that appeared on compositions were often chosen after careful deliberation, rather than resulting from carelessness or too hasty writing. A number of the portions of the protocols already referred to reveal such errors—Jeannie's choice of the conditional form over the future, for example. Occasionally, however, the taped protocols revealed that the mind and tongue were correct, while the hand was wrong. Rowena, a French III student (gifted), began her composition with an organizer:

Hier matin, quand je suis allé au picnic avec mon frère dans le parc, j'ai beaucoup des personnes.
In reading the composition, one becomes aware that Rowena has omitted
a past participle after "J'ai." Listening to the taped protocol, however, one hears:

J'ai vu beaucoup de ... 
The omission of the past participle in the composition was a careless error.

One of the more interesting results of the think aloud process for this researcher was to find out how students who really want to express something find their way around vocabulary barriers between native and target languages. Kristen, a Spanish II student (gifted), wrote a story based on the picture. Here is her completed composition.


Kristen's taped protocol shows more about how she wrote her story.

Kristen: Es un día bonito en el parque. Todos los personas divierten. Hay un hombre y su perro en el parque. También hay un ladrón. (Pause)

Researcher: What are you trying to say?

Kristen: I want to say "next to the tree, or behind the tree." (She decided to omit the phrase in question.) El ladrón es muy antipático y quiere robar la dinero--el dinero del hombre. (Pause)

Researcher: What are you thinking about:
Kristen: I'm trying to say that he jumps in front of the man, but I don't know the word for gun. I don't know "jumps." I know how to say "leaps"—I'll say that. El ladrón salta enfrente del hombre. El dice, "Dame su dinero." El hombre inocente es sorprendido pero no da el ladrón su dinero. El hombre corre—el hombre corre—I know what I want to say but it's hard to say it in Spanish. You forget all the words. El hombre cae en la calle... cae en la calle, I guess. (Pause) El ladrón rie mucho y prueba robar el dinero. Pero el hombre no tiene dinero. Pero el hombre no tiene un billete—not billete. Oh, well, el hombre no tiene dinero en sus bolsillos. El ladrón se enfada... of course it would be nice if they would give us mean words in class. We need them. I don't know how to say this... He jumps on the dog—that's disgusting! It's the only thing I know how to say, so I might as well!

The taped protocol reveals that Kristen had an idea for a story and she was going to tell it in some way. When she could not find a word she would have used in English, she searched for a viable substitute. For example, the thief would probably have stabbed, shot, or clubbed the dog, but Kristen did not know any of those words. She was disgusted with (and frustrated by) her inability to come up with anything more appropriate, but that did not stop her from completing her story. A number of other students did allow limitations in vocabulary to cause them to shorten or restrict their compositions. Della (French II, non-gifted), for example, had started to write a sentence about the runner in the picture:

Della: Le petit garçon... the word "to run"?
Researcher: You must think of that yourself.
Della: (Crosses out sentence) There! Fini!

Another example of a student who was determined to tell a story is one referred to in chapter three. Harry's protocols are not
Included in the 49 that have been considered throughout the study. He was brought to the testing room in one of the schools as a substitute for a student who was unable to participate in the study. Harry, enrolled in Spanish III (non-gifted), is a foreign student. At the age when his peers were undergoing the gifted identification procedures, Harry was just learning to speak English. Thus, his status, identified or not identified as gifted, could not be determined. Harry wrote the composition for the study, and in the process produced two very interesting protocols. A brief interview following the testing revealed that Spanish was his fourth language, as he spoke his native language, English, and was enrolled in French IV as well as Spanish III. Harry is a superb language learner, as a look at his protocols will show.

HARRY'S COMPOSITION


Portions of Harry's taped protocol show how he proceeded through
parts of the composition. Here is how he decided what the murderer was thinking of doing to the witness:

El señor teme que el asesino—no—um—kill, how to say "kill"... le me see how I can say... el asesino, um, puedo-pueda, um... French keeps coming to my mind (laugh)—I know it's "tuer", but... OK. El señor teme que el asesino pueda, um, venir y quemar su casa.

Burning the house was not Harry's first choice, but he needed a threat for his story, and found one in his store of vocabulary. Here is how Harry planned Pepe's strategy to bring the policeman:

Un policía está marchando en el sendero. Pepe, quien es muy inteligente, quiere—quiere huir y traer la policía. Pero el señor no lo permite. OK, now, Pepe piensa... he can't bite him, because I don't know the word. How can he get away? Jugar con el señor, pues cuando el señor tira la pelota... ball... pelota... Pepe puede huir y traer la policía. Lo hace pero cuando la, el—what am I thinking of? I have to change all these to "el" (and he did)—words that end in "a" and are "el"—I hate that!

As he tells the story, Harry is monitoring his structure and syntax. At the climax of his story, Harry has to figure out how Pepe is going to subdue the murderer:

There are a lot of things he could do, but I don't know the words for them. So what should he do? Um, OK, he's going to push him. Lo tira en el sótano. En el sótano? That's right... y pues comienza a, um, not bark! Empieza a... gritar! That's OK, empieza a gritar.

Not only is Harry's composition more sophisticated in structure, and more imaginative than most, he was able to verbalize in such a way that one can follow his thought processes and see exactly how he shapes his story. Harry, like Kristen, has a story to tell, and finds a way around lexical inadequacies to tell it. Britton (1970), in describing the degree to which a writer appeared to make a teacher-set task his or her own, referred to students' being able to
do this to such a degree that they seemed impelled—they gave the impression that they were not easily distracted from the subject matter; in the grip of a topic rather than in control of it (p. 27). In writing their stories, Kristen and Harry appear to come close to what Britton is describing.

**Strategies Used in the Think Aloud Process**

In reviewing the taped protocols, this researcher identified three types of writing strategies employed by the subjects in this study:

1. In describing the picture used as stimulus, subjects found resources in their target language lexicon to express items for which they could not find the exact equivalent in the target language.

2. Subjects found ways to express themselves in narratives that deviated from a simple description of the pictured items.

3. Subjects monitored their use of verbs, often pursuing a specific form from the infinitive to a final form that the subject found appropriate.

Analysis of the taped protocols indicates that about the same quantity of gifted and non-gifted students in this study employed the above strategies in writing the compositions. Blrckbichler (1983) pointed out, however, that some of the specific strategies employed by the students in this study resembled Tarone's (1981) description of strategies that second language learners use when attempting to communicate with native speakers. Tarone's list of communication strategies includes the following:
PARAPHRASE:

Approximation: use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker.

Word coinage: the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept.

Circumlocution: the learner describes the characteristics of elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure.

BORROWING:

Literal translation: the learner translates word for word from the native language.

Language switch: the learner uses the native language term without bothering to translate.

APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE: the learner asks for the correct term.

AVOIDANCE:

Topic avoidance: the learner simply tries not to talk about concepts for which the target language item or structure is not known.

Message abandonment: the learner begins to talk about a concept but is unable to continue and stops in mid-utterance.

(Tarone, 1981, p. 286)

This researcher agreed that the first of the three general strategies identified in this study could indeed be broken down according to Tarone's communication strategies, with some modifications for applying them to written compositions rather than to oral communication. This researcher also observed an additional strategy that she called message modification, where the taped
protocol revealed that the student had modified the message s/he intended to send because of vocabulary limitations or a momentary lapse of memory.

When the protocols were examined in terms of Tarone's communication strategies plus the additional strategy of message modification, some differences between the gifted and non-gifted students were revealed.

**COMMUNICATION/COMPOSITION STRATEGIES AS USED BY GIFTED AND NON-GIFTED STUDENTS IN THIS STUDY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>No. of Gifted</th>
<th>No. of Non-Gifted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approximation</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Colnago</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumlocution</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literal Translation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Switch</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal for Assistance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Avoidance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message Abandonment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message Modification</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-24

These figures indicate that the non-gifted students in this study asked for assistance more often than gifted students, and that their protocols showed more examples of message abandonment than those of the gifted students. The gifted students' protocols revealed more
use of circumlocution and word coinage than those of the non-gifted students.

These results are interesting because they represent opposite attitudes in communication, and, in this case, composition writing. The use of circumlocution and word coinage, which are paraphrasing strategies, indicates determination to get the message across. Appeal for assistance shows that a person desires to send the message, but has exhausted his/her internal resources for doing so. A person who uses the strategy of message abandonment has given up, and has decided not to send the message at all. Gifted students may be more persistent than non-gifted students in solving written communication problems by using their own resources.

Some of the specific strategies are interesting to look at. The strategy of approximation was the one employed most frequently by both the gifted and the non-gifted students. An example of this strategy is the variety of ways the French students found to express the idea of a man walking his dog (examples by gifted students are marked with a G, and by non-gifted students with an N):

(G) ... faisait une promenade avec son chien

(G) ... a son chien avec lui

(G) ... marche avec son chien

(N) ... et le chien promené dans le parc

(N) ... marche le chien

Spanish students described the boy and girl sitting on a blanket in a number of different ways:

(G) ... en una toalla
The students who used the strategy of word coinage produced some interesting and logical words. Based on the fact that a Spanish noun meaning someone who does something often ends in -dor (comprador, vendedor, etc.), one student came up with "tocadores de musica" (tocar = to play) for "band". Another student apparently derived "humor" from the noun, humo, "smoke." French students created the verb "surpriser" from the noun surprise, and the noun "chanton" from the verb chanter, "to sing." Most of the students who did not know the target language word for "bench" approximated that word by using "chair." One Spanish student, however, coined the term "parque sofa."

The strategy of circumlocution was used especially in expressing the words "thief" and "band." French students who did not know or could not remember the word valore referred to the thief in the picture the following ways:

(G) un garçon cruel
(G) un homme mal
(G) un criminel
(G) un homme ... suspicious
(N) un homme ... méchant
(N) un garçon qui se cache des personnes
Spanish students wishing to express "band" described the group playing the music as:

(G) un grupo de músicos
(G) un pequeño grupo musical
(G) . . . hago música
(N) personas que están tocando instrumentos

The three paraphrasing strategies were revealed by analyzing both the taped and written protocols. Other strategies that showed in both types of protocols were literal translation, language switch, and message abandonment. Some examples of the latter strategy that appeared in the taped protocols are:

(N) . . . "so that"—I can't say it (so she did not.)
(N) Subject said aloud, "The policeman is lazy," but wrote in the composition, "... cherche pour les burgalars."

Sometimes use of this strategy could be detected in the written protocols in the form of sentences that the subjects had begun and then crossed out.

Some of the strategies could be detected only by means of the taped protocol, as the written protocol showed only the student's final choice. One of those strategies is message modification. The examples show what the student was planning to write, and what s/he actually wrote:

(N) are having a picnic . . . I think it's "picnic." OK. Are eating.

(G) (Subject wanted to write about the children playing soccer.) . . . to the right of the girl eating . . . In
front of the band—don't know "in front of." How about, "There's a boy and a girl playing soccer."

Another strategy revealed only by the taped protocols is topic avoidance. Students began a topic verbally, decided that they could not manage it in the target language, and went on to another one.

(N) ... Don't know how to say "jog" or "run" (so he did not write about that.)

(N) I'm looking at the burglar, but I'm going to pass that one by. (He did.)

(G) There's a policeman doing something—I'm not sure what. (She does not write about him.)

(G) I don't know what "pipe" is, so I'll leave it out. (She did.)

A third strategy that only shows up in the taped protocols is that of appeal for assistance. This appeal may appear in the form of a request to be supplied with a specific item:

(G) What's the word for "Instrument"?

(N) To run?

(N) How do you say "hida"?

Sometimes, however, the students simply wanted confirmation that their choice was correct:

(G) Is a "bench" a banc?

(G) I think tomando is right.

(N) What's the word for newspaper? Journal?

(N) Is play "jouer"?
Although both gifted and non-gifted students appealed for assistance, most of the gifted students requested confirmation rather than asking for items to be supplied. More of the non-gifted than gifted students made direct requests for specific items. This finding is consistent with the notion that the gifted students seem to depend more upon their own resources than the non-gifted students.

Summary

Analysis of the taped and written protocols revealed three general types of writing strategies used by the students in this study:

1. In describing the picture used as stimulus, subjects found resources in their target language lexicon to express items for which they could not find the exact equivalent in the target language.

2. Subjects found ways to express themselves in narratives that deviated from a simple description of pictured items.

3. Subjects monitored their use of verbs, often pursuing a specific form from the infinitive to a final form that the subject found appropriate.

About the same percentage of gifted and non-gifted students employed the above strategies. When the first general strategy was broken down into more specific categories based on Tarone's list of communication strategies, however, some differences between the gifted and non-gifted students emerged. Both the gifted and non-gifted students used the paraphrasing strategy of approximation more than any of the others, and in fairly equal proportion. About the same number of students of both groups used the borrowing strategies, and the
strategies of message modification and topic avoidance. The paraphrasing strategies of word coinage and circumlocution, however, were used more often by gifted students than by non-gifted. More non-gifted students, on the other hand, employed the strategies of appeal for assistance and message abandonment.

The nature of the strategies used suggests that the gifted students were more likely to persist in their efforts to express themselves in the compositions than the non-gifted students. Even though both gifted and non-gifted students appealed for assistance, the gifted students' appeal was more often a request for confirmation of something that the students had thought of themselves rather than a request that a word or a structure be supplied. Even though all of the students who participated in this study were proficient second language learners, there seems to be a difference in the writing strategies that they employ.

Summary of Taped Protocol Information

A review of the taped protocols revealed a number of strategies used by the subjects for completing the writing task. Analysis of the protocols indicates that both gifted and non-gifted students employed those strategies in writing their compositions. The three kinds of strategies observed were those relating to vocabulary needed to describe the picture, to vocabulary needed to develop a narrative deviating from the picture, and to verbs that needed to be converted into the form the student believed appropriate for the particular sentence s/he was working on at the time. A more detailed analysis
of the first of these strategies indicated that gifted students were more persistent than non-gifted students in their efforts to express themselves in the compositions.

Almost equal numbers of students identified as gifted and students not so identified thought aloud (a) almost entirely in the target language, (b) almost entirely in the native language, or (c) in both languages in fairly equal proportions. In the category of difficulty in thinking aloud, however, all of the subjects were gifted students. After reviewing the taped and written protocols of these subjects the researcher was able to distinguish four different reasons for the difficulty:

1. Students were too preoccupied with the actual physical writing to think aloud.
2. Students carefully avoided making mistakes in order to write as perfect a paper as possible.
3. A student was very much preoccupied with the details in the picture stimulus.
4. A student stated that he was not accustomed to thinking aloud (conflicted with his learning style.)

In reviewing Maker's (1982) list of characteristics of gifted children, this researcher finds possible connections between the above students' approaches to the think aloud task and some of the characteristics of gifted children. Maker states that gifted children become absorbed and truly involved in certain topics or problems, and are persistent in seeking task completion. The two students totally absorbed in the physical writing process seem to be displaying these characteristics. Rona and Rita, number two on the list above, appear to be striving for perfection, a characteristic
that Clark (1979) warns may even become compulsive behavior in gifted children. Nancy, example number three, is a student that Maker would probably characterize as one who is a keen and alert observer, and is uninhibited in expressions of opinion. Karl, the last example above, would be described briefly by Maker as "Individualistic."

Forty-eight percent of the students identified as gifted, and 52% of those not so identified, thought aloud mainly in the target language while writing their compositions. These percentages are very close, and, as previously mentioned, probably reflect the fact that the subjects are all successful second language learners and are highly motivated to use the target language. Darlene, for example, a Spanish III student (non-gifted), refused to speak English with this researcher even during the informal periods before and after the testing. She used two English words in her protocols, "hiding" and "whistling." The remainder of the taped protocol is in Spanish. Willingness to use the target language, then, does not seem to be associated with giftedness. Many students identified as gifted, however, also thought aloud mainly in the target language. Richard, a French III student (gifted), although not as insistent in the use of the target language as Darlene, spoke on tape in French except for one brief time when he had a vocabulary problem:

\[ Il \ y \ a \ ou \ dos \ hommes \ldots \ joualent\ldots \text{WHAT'S THE WORD FOR "INSTRUMENT"?} \]

The researcher asked him to deal with the problem as if it were something he had to write in French class. Richard continued with:

\[ Quel \ joualent--\text{les trucs qui font)--qui font le son} \ldots \]
Although Richard is identified as gifted, and Darlene, by the identification criteria of her school is not so identified, although they are studying different languages, in different schools, they had something in common that probably influenced their desire to use the target language. Questioning by the researcher revealed that they both had visited the country where their particular target language was spoken during trips sponsored by the language departments of their respective schools. Richard had been corresponding with his French friends, thereby enriching his vocabulary with such lexical items as "truc" and "flic," and making him more comfortable with verb tenses other than the present indicative. Darlene's language was less sophisticated and less accurate than Richard's, but no less enthusiastic. These examples suggest that motivation is probably more important than giftedness in promoting the use of the target language. This finding agrees with Naftan, et al (1970), who found in their study of the good language learner that attitude toward the language learning situation played an important role in successful second language learning.

Twenty percent of those identified as gifted, and 17% of those not so identified, produced protocols mainly in the native language. A slightly higher percentage of the gifted students in this study preferred to think aloud in the native language. Another factor, however, should be considered. Of the nine students (representing five different schools) who thought aloud in the native language, all but one were French students. It is possible that students, even gifted ones, may be less comfortable pronouncing French, especially
In front of a stranger (this researcher), than Spanish. Of the eight French students in this category, six were at level II, indicating that they had had less exposure to the language.

Twenty-four percent of the gifted students thought aloud in both languages in fairly equal proportions compared with 30% of the non-gifted students. As previously noted, these protocols are some of the most interesting and informative relative to the kinds of strategies students use in writing, and in revealing how the subjects are mentally structuring their writing.

The four types of verbalizing while thinking aloud are summarized in Table 4-23.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Verbalizing in the Think Aloud Process</th>
<th>By Identification</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAINLY TARGET L.</td>
<td>MAINLY NATIVE L.</td>
<td>BOTH TARGET/ NATIVE L.</td>
<td>DIFFICULTY THINKING ALOUD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIFTED: 48%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-GIFTED: 52%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NOTE: Three of the students in this category also appear in category 2, and one in category 1.

Table 4-25
Summary

This study was conducted to learn more about writing strategies employed by proficient second language learners, especially in comparing the performances and products of those learners identified as gifted with those not so identified. With a picture provided as stimulus, the subjects wrote a short composition in the target language, thinking aloud as they composed. The written protocols were evaluated by means of three procedures: (1) a study of the arrangement patterns of the content of the compositions, (2) scores on three measures of syntactic maturity, and (3) holistic ratings by the researcher and four independent readers. The subjects were recorded as they thought aloud during the writing process. The resulting taped protocols were analyzed to try to discover strategies the students used to complete the writing task, and also to determine how students verbalized while thinking aloud.

The subjects were 49 junior high and high school students enrolled in level II or level III French and Spanish classes in school systems located near Columbus. Each student was tested separately because the thinking aloud process required a place where the subjects would neither disturb others nor be distracted from
their task. Upon completion of the testing the researcher analyzed the protocols and tabulated and interpreted the results.

Conclusions

The conclusions and implications of the results of the study will address the research questions presented in Chapter One.

1. What strategies will a proficient second language learner employ in writing a composition based on a picture shown him/her by the researcher?

Analysis of the taped and written protocols revealed three kinds of strategies employed in the writing of the compositions for the study. (1) Subjects found ways to express items in the picture for which they either did not know, or could not recall the exact target language equivalent. (2) Subjects found the means to express what they wanted to say in narratives that deviated from a simple description of the picture. (3) Subjects monitored verbs, often pursuing a specific form from infinitive to a finite form satisfactory to the subject.

2. In completing the above task, will there be differences between the strategies used by the proficient language students identified as gifted, and by those not so identified?

Review and analysis of the protocols revealed that, although both the proficient language learners identified as gifted and those not so identified used the strategies listed in number one, differences between the two groups were revealed when the first strategy was broken down into separate communication strategies of word coinage and circumlocution than did the non-gifted students. The strategies
of appeal for assistance and message abandonment were used more frequently by the non-gifted students than by the gifted students. Also, in appealing for assistance, the non-gifted students asked for specific vocabulary items or structures to be supplied more frequently than did the gifted students. The appeal for assistance from the gifted students was more often in the form of a request for confirmation of something the students already had in mind.

Since differences were found between the compositions, questions 3 and 4 will be discussed as a unit.

3. Will there be differences between the compositions written by the proficient second language learners identified as gifted, and by those not so identified?

4. If differences are discovered between the compositions of the two groups of proficient language learners, what are those differences?

The written protocols were evaluated (a) on arrangement patterns of the content of the compositions, (b) on three measures of syntactic maturity, and (c) by holistic ratings by the researcher and four independent readers. The results of all of those evaluations indicated to some degree that there are differences between the compositions of the two groups of proficient language learners.

Analysis of the compositions to determine arrangement patterns revealed that a larger percentage of the gifted students in the study arranged their compositions in patterns other than random additive than did the non-gifted students. On the measures of syntactic maturity, the scores for T-unit length and clause length favored the gifted students, especially the French students. The scores on clauses per T-unit did not favor the gifted group as much as the
other two measures, and in the French group the top two scores were made by students not identified as gifted, causing the group mean to be slightly larger than that of the French gifted group.

The results of the holistic scoring confirmed the results of the other two evaluation measures. Of the thirteen highest scoring compositions across both languages, only one paper was written by a student not identified as gifted. Sixty-two percent of those papers were written by students in level III. When the dimension of arrangement pattern was considered, it was found that all of the high scoring papers were written in patterns other than random additive. The raters did not necessarily choose the papers with the highest scores on the measures of syntactic maturity, but a number of those high scores do appear among the raters' choices for best papers. Considering the 12 papers with the lowest ratings across languages, 62% of them were written by students not identified as gifted, and all but one were written by level II students. All except one were written using random additive patterns of arrangement. The scores on the measures of syntactic maturity were generally in the middle to the bottom of the distribution, especially for clauses per T-unit. Seventy-five percent of the lowest papers scored 1.0000 on that measure, which is the lowest possible score.

5. What kinds of differences will be observed between the two groups of proficient language learners in the way in which they verbalize while thinking aloud as they compose?

This researcher identified four styles of thinking aloud used by the subjects as they wrote the compositions. Forty-nine percent of
all the students in the study verbalized mainly in the target language, 27% mixed the two languages in about equal proportions, and 18% used mainly the native language. Twelve percent found thinking aloud a very difficult procedure. Of the latter group of six students, however, three did verbalize to some degree in English, and one in the target language.

Differences between the gifted and non-gifted students are small, with a slight edge in favor of the non-gifted students on use of the target language, and mixing the languages. A slightly higher percentage of gifted students used mainly the native language. In the case of the six students who had difficulty with the think aloud procedure, however, there is a difference—all six of the students were gifted. A closer analysis of the protocols revealed four reasons for the difficulty: (1) Students were too busy writing to talk, (2) students were striving for perfection and did not experiment with the language, (3) a student was absorbed in the picture, and much of the verbalizing relates to its content, and (4) one student found that thinking aloud conflicted with his learning style. This researcher found that all of these students were exhibiting characteristics of gifted students as summarized by Maker (1982.)

Limitations of the Study

One obvious limitation is the wide variance in defining the gifted student. The reality of the situation is that each school system has worked out identification procedures that meet the needs
of its population given the limitations of its budget, staff, and facilities. This researcher believed that this study should be conducted based on the realities of gifted identification as it exists in the school systems at the present time.

A second limitation is the definition of the proficient second language learner. Again, this researcher chose the practical solution of accepting as proficient students those chosen by their teachers. In the testing situation a wide range of abilities was observed, but it must be kept in mind that writing is only one of the language skills, and usually the one students have used the least. As was stated in chapter three, very few of the level II students had written anything in the target language beyond the word or sentence level. In spite of that fact, by the way, five of the papers with the highest holistic ratings were written by level II students.

Finally, this is a qualitative study in which students were observed performing the kind of task that they might do, or have done, in their foreign language classes. Words like "significant" and "correlate" did not appear in the discussion of the results, as statistical analysis of the findings was not appropriate for this type of research. This limitation must be kept in mind when drawing conclusions about the results of the study.

Recommendations

Because the first two years of foreign language study as the secondary school level are generally spent building the basic vocabulary and syntactic skills in the language, usually with
emphasis on listening and speaking skills, very little writing is
done beyond the word or sentence levels. After having observed what
the subjects in this study were able to accomplish on a free writing
task, for many their first experience writing a paragraph on their
own in the target language, this researcher recommends that writing
activities beyond the sentence level be incorporated into the first
and second levels of the language program. The teacher, who knows
the basic level of the class, can structure those activities to meet
the needs of both the average and the gifted student. It may be, for
example, that the average students will need help on structures
already presented in class, while the gifted students will be looking
for expanded vocabulary and more sophisticated structures to express
what they want to say. A guided composition approach could be used
for the class as a whole, with a free composition component for the
gifted students.

The research of Britton, Emig, Zamel, and others has shown that
students tend to write better compositions when they are interested
in the topic about which they are writing. Teachers can provide
topics on a variety of subjects that students can pursue using the
language skills they already possess. Knowing only the present
tense, for example, does not preclude being able to address a wide
variety of subjects. If students, especially gifted students, are
interested in the topic, they may well pursue it to the point of
acquiring for themselves the necessary new vocabulary and syntax to
complete the task. A number of the students in this study stretched
themselves to the limit to express what they wanted to say in their
compositions. Had they been permitted to refer to a dictionary or grammer text, they would have come even closer to writing what they really wanted to say.

Students need to be encouraged to write using the language they possess as much as possible—to "think in the language." There is a fine line here, because forbidding students to use references when they write may lead to frustration, and that cuts off their writing. Any number of the compositions in this study were never fully developed because the students could not get past a vocabulary or structure block. Class exercises could be designed where students write short passages using only structure and vocabulary that they already know. This activity would be followed by one where they are "on their own", but have the recent experience of the controlled exercises to guide them and to remind them of what they know how to say. Gifted students may need this intermediate only very early in the program, or possibly not at all. The teacher should be prepared to help all of the students on an individual basis to use the language skills they already have at their command, and to guide them past any "blocks" they may encounter in their writing.

Teachers could build a file of topics and activities so that they would have them to draw on whenever needed. This way writing activities could be individualized to provide for the needs of all of the different types of students in the class. By individualizing an assignment, teachers can provide writing activities that are within the capabilities of all of the students in the class, and challenging to those who are academically gifted.
Suggestions for Further Research

The first recommendation is that the study be replicated with a different population. The students who participated in this study were all from the middle class, from suburban or small town areas near Columbus. Different results might be obtained from students living in a metropolitan or a rural area. Replication should be done also with students who are studying languages other than French or Spanish.

The gifted students in this study were all identified as "academically gifted," because that is the reality of the Identification process in the schools they attend. It would be interesting to replicate the study using students identified as "creatively" gifted.

Finally, the results of this study strongly suggest that there is need for a controlled experimental investigation of the differences between the two types of proficient second language learners. This study has just "scratched the surface"—or perhaps it would be better to say "confirmed that there is a surface to be scratched." A more rigorous type of study might be able to isolate more exactly the strategies used by the students, and determine differences between the two groups that did not reveal themselves in a one-time, free writing experience.
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APPENDIX A

PICTURE USED AS STIMULUS
APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM
I agree to be a subject and take part in a study which concerns writing a composition in Spanish/French, and having my comments tape recorded as I think about the composition during the writing of it. I understand that the purpose of the study is to find out more about what makes people good language learners. The nature and general purpose of the study have been explained to me. This research will be done by Carol L. McKay under the general direction of Dr. Edward D. Allen, of The Ohio State University.

I understand that I may ask questions about the study and get answers to those questions. I also understand that my name or identity and the name of my school will be kept completely confidential.

I understand that the composition that I write is for research purposes only, and will not be shown to my foreign language teacher.

Finally, I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time, if I tell the researcher.

Date: ___________________________ Signed: ________________________

Signed: ________________________ (Participant)

Signed: ________________________ (Investigator)

Signed: ________________________ (Person authorized to consent for participant)

Witness: ________________________
APPENDIX C

DIEDERICH SCALE DESCRIPTION
1. GENERAL MERIT

1. IDEAS

HIGH: The student has given some thought to topic and writes what he really thinks. He discusses each main point long enough to show clearly what he means. He supports each main point with arguments, examples, or details; he gives the reader some reason for believing it. His points are clearly related to the topic and to the main idea or impression he is trying to convey. No necessary points are overlooked, and there is no padding.

MIDDLE: The paper gives the impression that the student does not really believe what he's writing nor fully understands what it means. He tries to guess what the teacher wants and writes what he thinks will get by. He does not explain points very clearly or make them come alive to the reader. He writes what he thinks will sound good, not what he believes or knows.

LOW: It is either hard to tell what points the student is trying to make or else they are so silly that, if he had only stopped to think, he would have realized that they made no sense. He is only trying to get something down on paper. He does not explain his points; he only asserts them, and then goes on to something else, or repeats them in slightly
different words. He does not bother to check his facts, and much of what he writes is obviously untrue. No one believes this sort of writing, not even the student.

2. ORGANIZATION

HIGH: The paper starts at a good point, has a sense of movement, gets somewhere, and then stops. The paper has an underlying plan that the reader can follow; he is never in doubt as to where he is or where he is going. Sometimes there is a little twist near the end that makes the paper come out in a way that the reader does not expect, but it seems quite logical. Main points are treated at greatest lengths or with greatest emphasis, others in proportion to their importance.

MIDDLE: The organization of this paper is standard and conventional. There is usually a one-paragraph introduction, three main points each treated in one paragraph, and a conclusion that often seems tacked on or forced. Some trivial points are treated in greater detail than important points, and there is usually some dead wood that might better be cut out.

LOW: This paper starts anywhere and never gets anywhere. The main points are not clearly separated from one another, and come in a random order—-as though the student had not given any thought to what he intended to say before he started to
write. The paper seems to start in one direction, and then another, and another, until the reader is lost.

3. WORDING

HIGH: The writer uses a sprinkling of uncommon words or of familiar words in an uncommon setting. He shows an interest in words and in putting them together in slightly unusual ways. Some of his experiments with words may not quite come off, but this is such a promising trait in a young writer that a few mistakes may be forgiven. For the most part, he uses words correctly, but he uses them with imagination.

MIDDLE: The writer is addicted to tired old phrases and hackneyed expressions. If you left a blank in one of his sentences, almost anyone could guess what word he would use at this point. He does not stop to think how to say something: he just says it the same way as everyone else. A writer may also get a middle rating on this quality if he overdoes his experiments with uncommon words: if he always uses a big word when a little one would serve the purpose better.

LOW: The writer uses words so carelessly and inexactely that he gets far too many wrong. These are not intentional experiments with words in which failure may be forgiven; they represent groping for words and using them without regard to their fitness. A paper written in a childish
vocabulary may also get a low rating on this quality, even if no word is clearly wrong.

4. FLAVOR

HIGH: The writing sounds like a person, not a committee. The writer seems sincere and candid, and writes about something he knows, often from personal experience. You could not mistake this writing for that of somebody else. Although the writer may assume different roles in different papers, he does not put on airs. He is brave enough to reveal himself just as he is.

MIDDLE: The writer usually tries to appear better or wiser than he is. He tends to write lofty sentiments and broad generalities. He does not put in the little homely details that show that he knows what he is talking about. His writing tries to sound impressive. Sometimes it is impersonal and correct but colorless, without personal feeling or imagination.

LOW: The writer reveals himself well enough but without meaning to. His thoughts and feelings are those of an uneducated person who does not realize how bad they sound. His way of expressing himself differs from standard English, but it is not his personal style; it is the way uneducated people talk in his neighborhood. Sometimes the unconscious revelation is so touching that we are tempted to rate it high on
flavor, but it deserves a high rating only if the effect is intended.

II. MECHANICS

5. USAGE, SENTENCE STRUCTURE

HIGH: There are no vulgar or "illiterate" errors in usage by present standards of informal English, and very few errors on points discussed in class. The sentence structure is usually correct, even in varied and complicated sentence patterns.

MIDDLE: There are a few serious errors in usage and several in points discussed in class, but not enough to obscure meaning. The sentence structure is usually correct in familiar sentence patterns but there are occasional errors in complicated patterns: errors in parallelism, subordination, consistency of tenses, reference of pronouns, etc.

LOW: There are so many serious errors in usage and sentence structure that the paper is hard to understand.

6. Punctuation, Capitals, Abbreviations, Numbers

HIGH: There are no serious violations of rules that have been taught--except slips of the pen. Note, however, that modern editors do not require commas after short introductory clauses, around nonrestrictive clauses, or between short
coordinate clauses unless their omission leads to ambiguity or makes the sentence hard to read. Contractions are acceptable—often desirable.

MIDDLE: There are several violations of rules that have been taught—as many as usually occur in the average paper. Counts of such errors in high, middle, and low papers at various ages and socioeconomic levels would be desirable in order to establish standards.

LOW: Basic punctuation is omitted or haphazard, resulting in fragments, run-on sentences, etc.

7. SPELLING

HIGH: Descriptions of spelling levels are most often used in grading test papers written in class. Since there is insufficient time to make full use of the dictionary, spelling standards should be more lenient than for papers written at home. The high paper (at ages 14-16) usually has not more than five misspellings, and these occur in words that are hard to spell. The spelling is consistent; words are not spelled correctly in one sentence and misspelled in another—unless the misspelling appears to be a slip of the pen. If a poor paper has no misspellings, it gets a high rating on spelling, even if no difficult words are used.

MIDDLE: There are several misspellings on hard words and a few violations of basic spelling rules, but no more than one finds on the average paper. Spelling standards differ so
sharply from grade to grade and from one socioeconomic level to another that each school would do well to make a distribution of spelling errors per hundred words (at least for test papers written in class) and relate its ratings to this distribution.

LOW: There are so many spelling errors that they interfere with comprehension.

8. HANDWRITING, NEATNESS

HIGH: The handwriting is clear, attractive, and well-spaced, and the rules of manuscript form have been observed.

MIDDLE: The handwriting is average in legibility and attractiveness. There may be a few violations of rules for manuscript form if there is evidence of some care for the appearance of the page.

LOW: The paper is sloppy in appearance and difficult to read. It may be excellent in other respects and still get a low rating on this quality.

Diederich, 1974, pp. 55-58.
APPENDIX D

DESCRIPTION OF SCALE USED IN THIS STUDY
DESCRIPTION OF SCALE USED IN THIS STUDY

1. SPELLING/ACCENTS

HIGH: Students were not allowed to use a dictionary, so be somewhat lenient (one reason this has lower count than other parts of rating). Spelling is consistent unless there is a "slip of the pen." Has only a few misspellings, occurring in words hard to spell. Generally handles accents competently.

Consider wrong inflections on verbs, etc., under USAGE.

MIDDLE: Several misspellings on hard words; violations of basic spelling rules, but no more than one finds on an average paper. Seems to leave off accents habitually.

LOW: So many violations that they interfere with comprehension.

2. USAGE (General Grammar and Syntax)

HIGH: Sentence structure usually correct, possibly with some minor errors in usage, even in varied and complicated sentence patterns. Sentences show variety of form (Do not all begin with "hey/II y a"). Correct use of tenses other than present is a plus, but don't lower rating of papers well constructed in present tense.

MIDDLE: A few serious errors in usage, but not enough to obscure meaning. Sentence structure usually correct in familiar sentence patterns, but there are occasional errors in
complicated patterns. Student tends to keep to simpler sentence patterns.

LOW: So many errors in usage and sentence structure that the paper is hard to understand.

3. VOCABULARY

HIGH: Choice of words is generally accurate and appropriate. May experiment with words, perhaps because is unable to use a dictionary and wishes to express something s/he is not sure how to say in target language. For the most part, uses words correctly, but also with imagination.

MIDDLE: The sentences look as if they were taken from textbook dialogs. If a blank were left in one of the sentences, anyone could fill it. A writer may also get a middle rating if s/he overdoes experiments with uncommon words—for example, going so far out into "left field" to say something that the sentence does not mean what it is supposed to, or means nothing at all.

LOW: Uses words so carelessly and inexacty that gets far too many wrong. These are not intended experiments with words in which failure may be forgiven. Has used English words, or left blanks when the target language word did not come to mind.

NOTE: Do not rate a paper a 10 in Vocabulary if the student has used English words or left blanks.
QUANTITY OF IDEAS

HIGH: Has described in some way from 7 to 10+ of the line drawings in the picture.
MIDDLE: 4 to 6 of the drawings.
LOW: 0 to 3 of the drawings.

5. QUALITY OF IDEAS

HIGH: Student has gone beyond the line drawings themselves. May have expressed feelings or opinions, put self into the writing, told a story, etc.
MIDDLE: Student has introduced a few ideas going beyond the drawings.
LOW: Student has not gone beyond the drawings.

6. DESCRIPTIVENESS

HIGH: Student has included descriptive words and phrases (adjective and adverb) beyond simply stating the activity shown in the picture.
MIDDLE: Student has added a few descriptive words and phrases.
LOW: Student has added no descriptive words or phrases.

7. ORGANIZATION

HIGH: Paper starts at a good point, has sense of movement, and then stops. Keep in mind that students were not given time to plan paper (the reason this rating has lower count than
others). Paper has underlying plan that the reader can follow.

MIDDLE: Paper shows some organization. It is not simply a recitation of random activities from the picture.

LOW: Paper starts anywhere and stops anywhere. No indication of attempt to organize ideas.
APPENDIX E

SIX HIGHEST RATED SPANISH COMPOSITIONS
THE SIX HIGHEST RATED SPANISH PAPERS

Paper Number 2

Hay algunos gente que están oyendo a un pequeño grupo musical. Hay un novio y su novia en una sobrecama con una cesta y unas bebidas. Están cerca de un arbóel. Un hombre está leyendo una noticia y también está fumando.

Un chico está pensando a hacer algo mischivioso a un hombre viejo y su perro.*

Unos muchachos están jugando con una pelota. parecen a divertirse. *Una policía está caminando por el paseo hacia este hombre.

Esto es un pequeño fiesta muy agradable. Está cerca de una ciudad muy grande.

Paper Number 4

Paper Number 8


Paper Number 10


Hay hace calor. El parque es pequeño pero las personas lo le gusta.

Hay un hombre corre detrás de el parque. El hombre está corriendo en el sendero. O posibilidad El hombre está corriendo para la música porque le gusta musico.
El ladrón es malo y feo. Él le gusta jugar chistes en personas. El hombre con el perro no sabe el ladrón está mirándolo pero el perro ve el ladrón. El ladrón va a robar el hombre y el perro ahora. Después de robar el hombre el policía capturaría el ladrón. Entonces el ladrón escaparía de el policía. Entonces el novio correría para el ladrón pero el caería y llorar. Su novia lloraría también. Los músicos llorarían también pero tocarían porque tienen triste. Los niños están jugando porque no ven el robo.

Paper Number 12

Hay un hombre quién está caminando con su perro. El perro me parece muy triste. No sé porqué.

Hay un chico y una chica quienes están comiendo. La chica bebe una limonada y el chico también.

Hay un hombre quién está leyendo. Y fuma algo.

La ciudad está muy lejos de el parque.

Hay un tío quién está corriendo un sendero.

Los músicos tocando y la gente están escuchando.

Hay una chica y un chico quienes están jugando al fútbol.

Hay un ladrón detrás de el árbol y él va a robar a alguien. Y posible la policía va a verle.

Paper Number 18

Hay muchos acciones que ocurrió en el parque.

Hay un anciano que anda con su perro y hay un ladrón que parece querer robarlo, pero hay un policía cerca del anciano.
También hay dos niños juegan al fútbol un chico y una chica.

Y cerca de los novios hay un hombre que está fumando y está leyendo un periódico.

Y en el fondo hay un grupo de tocadores de música y ellos están tocando sus instrumentos. Y cerca de ellos hay espectadores que están escuchando a la música.
APPENDIX F

SEVEN HIGHEST RATED FRENCH COMPOSITIONS
C'est un petit parc près d'un grand côté. Il y a seize personnes dans cette parc à cette temps. Ils faisaient Toutes faisaient des choses différent. Le gendarme marche son route dans le parc quand un homme vieux lit le journal. Un autre homme cours dans l'autre cote de la parc. Un ensemble joue pour quatre personnes qui sent s'assit près d'on gazebo. Un petit garçon et une petite fille jouent du football près d'un autre garçon et une autre fille qui mangent et parlent sous un grand arbre sans feuilles. Un autre homme avec un grand nez marche avec son chien, qui regarde son maître ou un voleur qui se cache derrière un autre arbre sans feuilles.

Hier matin quand je suis allé au picnic avec mon frère dans le parc, j'ai beaucoup des personnes. Deux enfants avaient joué aux football. Un homme a marché avec son chien petit. Un group instrumental a joué la belle musique pour un belle jour. Nous avons mangé des sandwiches, et des fruits, et des coca cola. Un homme vieux a lu le journal avec beaucoup d'intéress. Un homme de la police a marché vers le parc pour un criminal. Le criminal a cassé derrière une arbre. L'homme de la police a trouvé le criminal après un demi heure. Un homme a couru près de ville pour exercice. Nous avons vu nos grands-parents à le parc après le group instrumental s'ont arrêté. Tout a coup, le soleil a commencé casser, et nous
avons préparé partir. Nous sommes partis le parc et arrivés avant la pluie a commencé tomber.

**Paper Number 30**

C'est une jour avec le soleil brille pendant le printemps. Je décidé pour prendre une promenade. Pendant mon promenade, j'ai vu quel-que choses intéressante. prem Le première objet que je regarde c'est un homme qui prendre son chien pour une promenade. Alors, je vois un garçon et une fille qui mangent le déjeuner. Je traverse la parc. A l'autre endroit, je regarde les enfants jouent avec une footbali. Alors, je reste à la chaise et écoute à la musique de la "band." La soleil devenu très brille, et je devenu très chaudo. Je retourne à chez-moi.

**Paper Number 32**

C'est samedi dans le parc. Il y a beaucoup de personnes. Deux enfants jouent au football. Aussi, un garçon marche ton chien. L'arbre est mort parce que c'est l'hiver. Le chien regarde le garçon cruel et l'arbre. Le garçon cruel va attaquer le garçon avec le chien, alors le chien a peur. Trois musiciens jouent pour une foule de quatre personnes. Un parson joue au violon. Elle joue très bien, est la foule est satisfait. Mais le monsieur qui fume est mal, parce qu'il veut regarder les photos dans "La Gazette." Il déteste la musique. Il va demander à l'agent demander à les musiciens cesser. Le garçon avec la fille pense qu'il est tellement cool. La fille
l'aime. (Elle est très stupide--le garçon aime beaucoup d'autres filles aussi).

Paper Number 37

Un jour dans un parc près de Paris, je voyais des jeunes dans l'horbe. Ils mangeant un picnic et ils se parlaient. Derrière un arbre, j'ai vu un voleur et je croyais que le voleur, il regardait un homme avec un petit chien. Pour moi, le chien a l'air de solf, mais il n'y a pas de l'eau pour le chien. Je voyais aussi un flic qui sifflait, et près de ce flic il y a eu un homme qui fumait une pipe. Aussi dans le parc, il y a eu des hommes qui jouaient les trucs qui font le son. Dans le champs il y a eu un garçon avec sa petite copine. Ils jouent au football--pas football américain. C'est presque tous, tout le monde s'amuse!

Paper Number 41

Un Jour au Parc

Ce parc est situé à la compagnie ou un banlieu. Deux enfants, un garçon et un jeune fille, jouent aux football. Un jeune couple amoureux mangent leur déjeuner sur un couverture. Un voleur regarde un homme qui est avec son chien. Un autre homme lit son journal sur un banc. Le voleur est derrière un arbre parce qu'il y a un agent près de lui. Les gens sur les chaises écoutent la musique dans le parc. On peut voir la ville qui est loin du parc. Un garçon court.