NOTE TO USERS

The Effects of Matching Learning Strategies to Learning Modalities in the Acquisition of the Present Perfect with Adult ESL Learners

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August 2004

A Thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts In Second Language Education

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 0-494-12701-5
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 0-494-12701-5

ABSTRACT

Three adult ESL students in a private setting participated in this case study, which investigated the effects of teaching students through strategy instruction, to adopt learning strategies that matched their individual learning style. I designed the training to draw attention to 16 learning strategies, that learners could chose from, according to their VARK (visual, aural, read & write, kinesthetic) profile. Instruction was provided in the context of an intermediate level 1 class, for a weekly three hour class. The focus of the study was to gain knowledge of cognition, metacognition and apply that knowledge to the use of personalised learning strategies. The goal was to then apply these strategies to facilitate learning a new verb tense, the present perfect. The training provided opportunities for practice, in both the learning strategies and the linguistic content. This study is a descriptive case study and not an experimental study. Therefore, in order to describe the contributions of strategy instruction, as revealed by the data, I employed a number of procedures. Pretest and postest results were analysed and showed a significant increase in the ability of students exposed to the training to correctly use the present perfect in context. Interview and questionnaire data were used to complement the test score data. It appears that strategy instruction is a factor that contributed to the score improvement and, because strategy instruction entails a number of elements, it is the combination of these elements such as the selection and use of appropriate strategies, cognitive and metacognitive awareness, knowledge of self, and practice in context that contributed to the score gains.

RÉSUMÉ

Trois étudiantes de l'anglais langue seconde (ESL) inscrites à un cours privé en entreprise, ont participé à cette étude descriptive qui a examiné les effets d'une approche d'instruction stratégique enseignant l'utilisation de stratégies correspondant au style d'apprentissage des étudiantes. L'instruction stratégique a été conçue afin d'attirer l'attention des étudiantes vers 16 stratégies d'apprentissage correspondant à leur profil individuel VARK (visuel, auditif, écrit & lu, kinesthésique). Le contexte d'enseignement était une classe hebdomadaire de trois heures, de niveau intermédiaire 1. Le but de la recherche était d'introduire des notions de cognition et de métacognition, et d'utiliser des stratégies d'apprentissage personnalisées afin de faciliter l'apprentissage d'un nouveau temps de verbe, le "present perfect". L'instruction comportait des conditions qui facilitaient la mise en pratique des stratégies ainsi que le contenu linguistique. Parce que cette recherche constitue une étude descriptive et non une étude de type expérimental, j'ai décrit les contributions apportées par l'approche d'instruction stratégique, démontrées par les données récoltées lors de l'étude. J'ai donc analysé le pré-test et le post-test, et les résultats ont démontré une amélioration significative de l'habileté des étudiantes, ayant reçu l'instruction stratégique, à utiliser correctement le "present perfect" en contexte. De plus, j'ai utilisé les données générées par les entrevues et les questionnaires afin de compléter les résultats obtenus lors des tests. Il semble que c'est la combinaison des éléments présents dans l'instruction stratégique, tels la sélection et l'utilisation de stratégies adéquates, la prise de conscience de la cognition et de la métacognition, la compréhension accrue des notions de style d'apprentissage, ainsi que la pratique en contexte qui, ensemble, ont contribué à l'amélioration des résultats.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to all who contributed directly or indirectly to this study.

I wish to salute my Mothers' incredible courage in her fight against cancer. Mom, you inspire us all and we know you are going to win!

To Neil Fleming who generously shared his thoughts about the instrument he developed (the VARK learning style questionnaire) and to my students in Drummondville, for their enthusiastic participation in this study, you have my gratitude.

To my husband Charles, whose cheerful dispositions have always made me laugh even during difficult times.

Finally, I want to extend a special thanks to Dr. Carolyn Turner, whose assistance, expertise and kindness throughout my experience in the MA program were invaluable.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In recent years there have been many transformations in the field of education, which affected both the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) and the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Education has become more personalised and this has brought two significant changes: the recognition of individual learning styles and the shift from teacher to learner-centred instruction (Nyikos, 1996). This shift in the roles of teachers and students has had an impact on instruction. Teachers have increasingly become aware of differences in learning styles and have begun to target a type of instruction called strategy instruction, which teaches students how to use personalised learning strategies to control their own learning. SLA researchers like Cohen (1996) define strategy instruction as:

> Explicit classroom instruction directed at learners regarding their language learning and use [sic] strategies, and provided alongside instruction in the foreign language itself. The goal of strategy-based instruction is to help second language students become more aware of the ways in which they learn most effectively, ways in which they can enhance their own comprehension and production of the target language...(p. 13).

As Chamot (2001) stated, there is a need for more studies to determine the effects of strategy training (instruction) on language learning (cited in Rossiter, 2003 p.2). The present study investigates the effects of strategy instruction on the acquisition of the present perfect with adult ESL learners who are employing strategies that match their preferred learning styles in terms of learning modalities.

Statement of the Problem

As a teacher of adult ESL students I observed differences in the ways my students learn English. I became interested in implementing a type of language instruction that was both effective and personalised. My concern was to cater to the individual learning styles of students. I therefore began using the VARK (visual, aural, read & write and kinesthetic) sensory modality questionnaire, to identify the perceptual learning styles profile of my students (Fleming, 1987, cited in Fleming & Mills, 1992). I then instructed my students on

how to adopt learning strategies that were suited to their own perceptual learning styles profile. To contextualise the instruction, I found that the cognitive approach to second language (L2) learning was valuable, because it views students as active participants in their learning process. It also makes provisions for the declarative knowledge (grammar rules) and procedural knowledge (the learning strategies) and explains the mental processes involved in language learning.

In the present study, learning strategies refer to procedures used by the students to make language learning more effective (Mitchell & Myles 1998). Learning styles are defined as the ways in which students prefer to process information, and refer to "a tendency to use certain learning tools and to avoid others" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1993, p.109). The learning styles are expressed in terms of VARK learning modalities. The acronym VARK stands for visual, aural, read & write and, kinesthetic sensory modalities that students use in learning. These sensory modalities are seen as "doors" through which students take in and then process information. The VARK learning style questionnaire (Fleming, 2001) provides a perceptual learning style profile for each student.

Rationale and Aim

According to O'Malley & Chamot (1993), language teachers can address the variety of students' learning styles in their classrooms either by delivering instruction through different modalities or by teaching students to employ strategies that are according to their preferred learning modalities. In the Spring of 2002, in a pilot study (Bourgeois, 2002), I investigated the effects of delivering instruction through the different modalities. That is, I used the VARK questionnaire to gain knowledge of my students' perceptual modalities and proceeded to deliver grammar instruction in a multimodal fashion (using the four VARK modalities). My goal was to evaluate the effects of a multimodal presentation of course content on the acquisition of grammar with my adult ESL students. Even though learning strategies were presented and discussions on metacognition (reflection on learning strategies) were provided, the students did not actively use learning strategies. At the end of the study, an opinion questionnaire revealed that only 36% of the students attributed the help they received to the combination of learning strategies and

metacognitive knowledge. These results can be attributed partially to the teacher-centred nature of the research design. Because I, the teacher, was in charge, students did not take control of their learning. Thinking back on the experience, I realised that I needed to give students more responsibility for their own learning. This position is in accord with the cognitive perspective of second and foreign language acquisition. In this theoretical frame, students are trained to takes control of their own learning through the active use of language learning strategies. This can be achieved through strategy instruction.

I therefore undertook, in the present study, to explore O'Malley & Chamot's (1993) second recommendation, namely to teach students to employ strategies that are according to their preferred learning modes. This approach is also advocated by Fleming (1995), who believes that "the preferences of students for particular modes of information... can provide a focus for developing strategies that are tailored for individuals" (p. 1). The strategies that students employed were used in the context of focus on form instruction.

This study therefore investigates the effects of strategy instruction on the acquisition of the present perfect with adult ESL learners who are employing strategies that match their preferred VARK learning modalities. The case study took place in a business setting and the participants were three female ESL learners, classified at the intermediate level, in the context of a weekly three-hour grammar class, which lasted 13 weeks. This research serves to inform readers on the effects of matching learning strategies to learning modalities on the acquisition of the present perfect in a strategy instruction approach.

Further to the above, Chapter 2, reviews the relevant literature on: cognitive theory, focus on form instruction, learning styles, and learning strategies. Chapter 3 describes the research questions and methodology. In Chapter 4 the results are presented and a discussion follows. Chapter 5 provides the limitations, the implications, the recommendations and contributions of the study, along with the final conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

This chapter examines the existing literature on the cognitive approach to L2 learning. More specifically, the chapter is divided into five sections: the first section explains the cognitive approach to L2 learning; the second section provides information on focus on form instruction; the third section examines learning style; the fourth section refers to learning strategies and strategy instruction; and finally, the fifth section presents the conclusion to the present chapter.

The Cognitive Approach to L2 Learning

Cognitive learning theory helps students see learning as a process, whereby knowledge is built and skills are learnt (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronnin, 1995). Before explaining the cognitive learning theory it might be important to define the term skill. The Longman Dictionary (2001), refers to skill as: "an ability to do something well especially because you have learned and practised it" (p.1346). Therefore, a skill can be learned through an understanding of the processes involved in learning itself and through practice. In the present study, skills refer to two cognitive skills: the linguistic skills and the learning strategies.

The following concerns the information-processing model, which explains how cognitive skills are learned. The framework has been utilised in cognitive psychology and education for a number of years and has been recently applied to L2 learning. Within this theoretical frame, the students operate a complex system taking in the linguistic information (the input) to process and transform it according to stored information. Various information processing models exist (e.g. McLaughlin 1990; Anderson 1985 cited in Mitchel & Myles, 1998), however, Anderson's ACT (Adaptive Control of Thought: 1983, 1985; cited in Mitchel & Myles, 1998) is the most comprehensive, because it can be applied to learning strategies and includes two essential dimensions, which are: cognition and perception (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). Cognition refers to "the processes whereby we understand, remember, recall, and use this information" (Hatch & Yoshitomi, 1993)

and perception has to do with the preferences for the senses (modes) through which we take in information. SLA researchers (e.g., O'Malley & Chamot 1993; DeKeyser, 1998, Robinson, 2001; and Mitchell & Myles 1998) have discussed principles regarding cognitive approaches to L2 learning. The following is a summary of their opinions as well as the opinions of other researchers.

The mind is a processor, which takes in information (input) into the short term memory for a short period of time via the senses. Therefore, all information enters our brains through our senses. During conscious learning, the brain initially processes the declarative knowledge in a controlled manner. The term declarative refers to knowledge of the language system in terms of words or grammar rules. The working memory is the instance that manipulates information, that is, it draws information from both the short and the long term memory, to compare the new input to the already stored information. The working memory also manipulates information so that it becomes meaningful, and encodes it in the long-term memory into frames or "schemata". These schemata are made up of information from previous experience or education. The schemata can be changed, either by adding to or restructuring them. When we refer to adding to or withdrawing from the schemata we refer to the terms storage and retrieval. "Storage and retrieval of knowledge from long-term memory improve with practice and vary with subject-matter familiarity" (Birsh, 1999 p. 11). Initially, when students process new input, they resort to controlled processing. Controlled processing activates new neural networks (to perform unfamiliar tasks), and this utilises much working memory space because it requires a lot of attention. Therefore, a transition from declarative (controlled) to procedural (automatic) knowledge becomes very important to liberate working memory space. This shift from controlled to automatic processing of knowledge occurs through proceduralisation. Proceduralisation refers to "how to" perform a language activity, including comprehension or production of language. What occurs during proceduralisation, is an encoding of a new behaviour via a production system, which consists of condition-action pairs (DeKeyser, 1998), that dictates an action under a specific condition. The condition and corresponding actions "are connected by an IF-THEN sequence" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1993 p. 96). For example, if a rule states that verbs take an *–s* at the third person singular of the simple present tense, then

the action is to apply the rule when the personal pronouns "he" or "she" are encountered in a sentence. Operating production systems requires metacognitive knowledge, which consists of reflection on or evaluation of the steps taken in attaining a goal. Once proceduralisation has occurred, automatisation begins. Automatisation means that a skill is performed rapidly and accurately without having to think about each element of the action (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). One reason why automatisation is important in language learning is that it plays an essential role in our ability to use a language. This is because, as mentioned earlier, it liberates the working memory, which can then attend to more complex processing. Therefore, establishing the declarative knowledge, before it can be turned into procedural knowledge, is important because an initial processing of the declarative knowledge is necessary as it improves its availability and establishes it before proceduralisation starts. During proceduralisation, the retrieving of output is still a slow process; however, through more study and practice proceduralisation becomes automatisation. In relation to strategy instruction, it is the teacher's role to explicitly inform students on these processes, so that they may understand the learning processes and play an active role in adopting personalised learning strategies.

Focus on Form Instruction

Because the mind has a limited processing capacity, students are not capable of simultaneously focusing on all of the aspects of a task. They must therefore prioritise what they give their attention to (Anderson, 1995; Skehan, 1996, Van Patten 1990, cited in Yuan & Ellis, 2003). Therefore, the teacher should provide a learning environment that facilitates L2 learning. One way to do so is to explicitly teach the grammatical structures, within the context of focus on form instruction. Therefore, explicit grammar presentation and focus on form instruction, will now be addressed.

In the province of Quebec, the communicative approach is still prevalent in the school system, including the adult ESL context. The approach (also called the Natural Approach) is based on Krashen's theory, which evolved in the late 1970s, and which represents a model of second language acquisition. The approach is based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis (Krashen 1985, cited in Mitchel & Myles, 1998), in which Krashen

argues that in order for the acquisition of a language to occur, it is enough to present input to students, who pay attention to the meaning found in that comprehensible input. The necessity of presenting language input to L2 students is a position that is undisputed among language theorists, although it only depicts part of the picture concerning what language learning entails, leaving out the necessary attention to the language forms. This is because Krashen's theory is based on the assumption that L2 language learning is similar to learning an L1, which means that students acquire it intuitively, that is without conscious analysis. This position is contrary to the opinion of researchers (e.g., DeKeyser, 1998; Robinson, 2001) who now argue that SLA cannot occur simply as a result of implicit and incidental learning and who now favour a revival of formal instruction, entailing the conscious involvement of students in the acquisition of an L2. It is interesting to note, however, that in his latest version of the Interaction Hypothesis, even Krashen makes provisions for attention to language forms, stating that it may influence the extent to which L2 input (information coming from the environment) may become L2 intake (information becomes part of the students internal developing L2 system) (Mitchell & Myles, 1998).

In Canada, studies in the immersion programmes have shown that even though students improved in their comprehension of French, they still did poorly on the language forms in spite of a profuse meaning-oriented input. In these studies, much communicative input (comprehensible input) was provided, which was proven to facilitate comprehension, but not grammatical accuracy (Braidi, 1995, cited in Lyster, 2002). Doughty and Williams (1998) reported on classroom studies (e.g., Harley, 1992; Vignola & Wesche, 1991) that demonstrate that when second language instruction was completely meaning focused, certain linguistic forms did not develop to the levels targeted. There are two possible reasons for this: (a) meaning focused interaction (negotiation of meaning) mainly leads to mutual comprehension and can be performed in spite of inaccurate grammatical forms (Swain, 1985, cited in Lyster 2002), and (b) drawing on the information processing theory, because of the limited processing capacity of the brain, students cannot simultaneously attend to various aspects of a task (Anderson, 1995, cited in Yuan & Ellis, 2003), therefore they tend to favour one aspect of language (i.e., meaning), over another (i.e., form). An example of this is a study by Van Patten (1990,

cited in Robinson, 2001), who "has demonstrated that learners cannot pay attention to language forms without a loss of attention to language content and that when allowed to allocate attention freely, they will prioritise concern for content over concern for form" (p.189). Therefore, SLA researchers (e.g., Long & Robinson 1998; Spada, 1997; Doughty 2001, cited in Robinson 2001) agree that "access to comprehensible input, and processing for meaning alone are not sufficient conditions for attaining native-like knowledge of a L2, and that some attention to language form is necessary" (p. 343). Furthermore, Lightbown (1998) argues that classroom-based research has provided evidence that focusing "attention to language features is often beneficial and sometimes necessary" (p.180). Lyster's opinion (1994) also concurs with this statement as he states that learners sometimes need to focus on form to overcome knowledge gaps on certain language features. DeKeyser (1998) summarises the issue stating that "the vast majority of publications since the early 1990s support the idea that some kind of focus on form is useful to some extent, for some forms, for some students, at some point in the learning process" (p.42).

Focus on form instruction is a general term which is used broadly to refer to any technique used to bring students' attention to language form. In this sense, it includes both focus on form and focus on forms. Ellis (2001, as cited in Lyster 2004, p. 2) refers to focus on form as "any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form" and DeKeyser (1998) defines focus on forms as teaching discrete points of grammar or grammatical structure, at moments when the teacher decides it is appropriate to do so. One of the reason why focus on form instruction is beneficial is that, in relation to information processing, it might compensate for students' lack of aptitudes in terms of grammatical deficiencies. This means that by drawing students' attention to forms may facilitate learning of the linguistic features of the language and release the "load" on working memory to free more attentional resources for further learning. (Robinson, 2001, p. 345). Norris and Ortega (2000) state in their meta-analysis of studies on the effectiveness of L2 instruction that explicit teaching conditions significantly produce better results than implicit teaching conditions. For instance, DeKeyser (1995, 1997) and Robinson (1997) have demonstrated the superior effect of explicit instruction over implicit learning in short-term learning. Explicit means that the

students are aware of what they are learning and that they are thinking about the rules (i.e., a generalised instance of the rule) as they are performing a task. The reason why explicit instruction is useful is because it makes the input salient or noticeable and helps the students focus attention on the forms and meaning, which is a prerequisite for subsequent processing. The notion of awareness refers to giving attention to or noticing the form in the input. This is the noticing hypothesis, which states that "what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning" (Schmidt, 1995, as cited in Robinson 1997, p. 224). In other words learning occurs through noticing the formal linguistic forms in the input. This is opposed to the term implicit learning which amounts to an unconscious memorisation of exemplars or inference of rules that occurs when students are not aware (do not understand clearly) what is being learned. An example of this is would be Krashen arguing for implicit learning, stating that students, when provided with only large amounts of input, would induce the rules from it. Therefore, laboratory and classroom studies have compared outcomes of explicit to implicit learning conditions, and have demonstrated the superiority of explicitly focusing students' attention on form. The following studies are such examples.

DeKeyser (1995) conducted a laboratory study using a miniature linguistic system called Implexan, with 61 students, and tested two hypothesis: "that explicit-deductive learning would be better than implicit-inductive learning for straightforward (categorical) rules, and that implicit-inductive learning would be better than explicit-deductive learning for fuzzy rules" (p. 380). Deductive learning means that rules are taught before examples are given; and inductive learning means that examples are provided and students need to find out the grammatical pattern. The task was designed to allow students to use five simple abstract morphological rules that applied to the use of 98 vocabulary items. The students were separated in two groups: the explicit and the implicit group. The students in the explicit group were taught grammar rules, and their task was to provide a sentence corresponding to a picture. The implicit group was only exposed to a combination of pictures and sentences and they also had to type a sentence corresponding to a picture. The results of the study confirmed the hypothesis, although only the explicit deductive learning was found to be statistically significant.

A few years later, DeKeyser (1997) went a step further, demonstrating that explicitly learned knowledge could be automatised (i.e., performed rapidly and accurately). In a study, a total of 61 students were explicitly taught the morphosyntactic rules governing a miniature linguistic system and 32 items. The students were given different rules of comprehension and production to practice. The study showed a gradual automatisation of the rules as a function of practice and also proved that learning of second language rules are specific skills that can be developed over time. The specificity of skills means that when the students proceed to production practice, for instance, they will improve in that specific skill only.

Another laboratory study, performed by Robinson in 1997 (cited in Robinson 2001), with 104 adult Japanese ESL learners sought to evaluate the extent to which students were able to acquire a rule pertaining to new English verbs under four training conditions. The four conditions were: the implicit and incidental, representing conditions with no focus on form and enhanced (rule-search) and instructed conditions, representing conditions with focus on form. To perform their tasks, students had to do the following: in the implicit condition students had to remember instances of input; in the incidental condition, students had to process input for meaning; in the enhanced condition the students processed input for meaning and were provided with enhanced form features; and in the instructed condition they were taught easy and hard rules concerning the input and were led to apply them to examples. The aim of the research was to understand the different learning processes that would occur under these different training conditions. Robinson found that the focus on form groups (i.e., enhanced and instructed training conditions) "outperformed all the other groups with respect to the easy rule, but its advantage on the hard rule reached significance only in relation to the rule-search group" (p. 339) in their ability to accurately transfer knowledge learned during training to new sets of sentences. He argues that the reason for this is the fact that students used the rules to guide their grammatical judgement in the transfer tasks.

These studies demonstrate the superiority of rule presentation for gains in accuracy. Such results can be expected, however, only if the target grammatical structures are specific and simple, that enough examples are shown and that instruction is well planned and is presented over a long period of time.

In a quasi-experimental classroom study, Lyster (2004), investigated the effects of focus on form and corrective feedback on the ability of 179 fifth-grade immersion students to provide accurate grammatical gender in French. The aim of the training was to enable the L2 learners to acquire rule-based internal representation of grammatical gender through focus on form instruction. The training was incorporated into the regular subject-matter instruction with three out of four teachers who provided the training for a total of nine hours during a period of five weeks. The role of the fourth teacher was to teach the same subject matter, but without incorporating focus on form. In the research design, provisions were made to draw attention to the endings of the noun as a measure to help chose the correct grammatical gender. There were noticing activities, which consisted of typographically enhanced texts; inductive tasks, to lead students to notice orthographic and phonological patterns of genders; and instruction that enhanced consciousness via focus on form along with various feedback types (prompts and recasts). It was found that all the students receiving form-focused instruction significantly improved in their ability to accurately use grammatical genders. Furthermore, the combination of focus on form instruction with prompts as a feedback move was even more effective. The study revealed that learners developed rule-based knowledge of grammatical gender, and this was verified by the overall success of students in their accurate use of both high and low frequency lexical items as well. This is important as one of the study's aim was to impact students' system of rule-based representation by enhancing consciousness via focus on form processing.

Aside from focus on form, in L2 instruction a number of teaching techniques have emerged over the years, which also aim to bring attention to language form. For instance, *input enhancement* techniques, were designed to favour a more efficacious use of linguistic elements in L2 language learning by drawing students' attention to the language

forms. Simard (2002), in a summary of these techniques, mentions the following: the Garden Path technique (Tomasello & Herron, 1989), explicit instruction (White, Spada, Lightbown & Ranta, 1991), grammatical consciousness-raising task (Fotos, 1994), contrastive analysis (Sheen, 1996; Spada & Lightbown, 1999) and processing instruction (Cadierno, 1995).

Learning Style

Students who are familiar with their own learning styles will be in a better position to learn and study. This is because learning styles provide metacognitive awareness (knowledge about one's own cognition) and students are able to gain control over their learning processes. Felder (1995) defines learning styles as "the ways in which an individual characteristically acquires, retains, and retrieves information", (p. 21). The learning style literature is somewhat confusing due to the wide variety of terms and the many different dimensions that make up the various learning style models. Therefore, it is difficult to unify the behaviour that these same models predict. For example, some models predict various components of learning style, including personality traits, attitudes, psychological and sociological factors. Others describe a learning repertoire rather than a style. For instance, they include such traits as responses to light, temperature, mobility needs, etc. (Sims & Sims, 1995). It is therefore important to classify the terms and identify the main categories and the subcategories of learning styles to make sense of all this information.

Some researchers have attempted to classify the terms in order to help understand the issues involved in training. One of the clearest classifications of learning style instruments is Curry (1987, cited in Hickcox, 1995), who organised 21 learning style instruments into what she called "the onion model". The framework is made up of three layers, which represent the three levels of personality characteristics. The framework is useful to organise the various avenues of research on learning styles as they provide a visual portrait of the three different levels. Starting from the core, the layers are as follows: (1) personality related learning preferences, (2) information processing dimensions, and (3) instructional preferences models. As we move from the centre to the outer level of the

model, the traits become less stable and are more susceptible to change, implying that the instruments to measure these traits become more uncertain as we move towards the outward layer of the model. This explains why it is difficult to develop valid and reliable measures to assess these instructional preferences. The following is an example of three inventories corresponding to the three levels of the model: The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers, 1962) provides the personality style, which consists of the individual approach to taking in information; The Kolb (1976) Learning Style Inventory, evaluates the bipolar concepts of concrete versus abstract conceptualisation, and reflective versus active experimentation; and the Dunn & Dunn & Price (1987) Learning Style Inventory, investigates factors that are likely to affect learning such as environmental, emotional, physical sociological or psychological elements. Even though the models present different methodologies, most of them agree on the importance of attending to individual differences to improve students' performance.

"Teachers have been aware for many years that learning styles differ among students. Although it is probably not feasible for teachers to cater to the full range of learning styles, it is possible to take into account modal preferences." (St Hill, 1999, cited in Fleming 2001, p. 45). Fleming also argues that the best way to attend to the various learning styles present in a classroom is to empower students through knowledge of their own learning styles (Fleming & Mills, 1992). Therefore, to promote students' awareness of their own preferences for the channels (senses) used in taking in (intake) and giving out (output) information, Fleming designed the VARK (visual, auditory, read & write and kinesthetic) Questionnaire. The VARK Questionnaire is an instrument that identifies the perceptual learning style profile of students. The questionnaire falls within the third category (instructional preference models) of Curry's model (1983, cited in Hickcox, 1995) and it is considered a subcategory of learning style because it identifies the perceptual learning profile of students. In essence, the perceptual (or modal) preferences are concerned with the primacy of certain senses for modes of information input and output. Regarding the modal preferences it predicts, Fleming (2001) states that it is " only one part, admittedly a powerful and pragmatic part, of the complex set of attributes that make up a learning style" (p. 41). He also mentions that the questionnaire was designed to be

advisory (rather than diagnostic) to serves as a catalyst for metacognitive reflection and to assist learners in adopting learning strategies that match their learning style profile. The development of VARK was mainly based on experience with teachers and learners and much of the research to develop the instrument was done in the 1980's. As Fleming was giving workshops at Lincoln University (New Zealand), to improve his students' strategies for academic success, he questioned them regarding the difficulties that they experienced in the manner in which course material was presented. Students reported that they experienced difficulties when material was presented only orally, only in written form or only in graphics. This information prompted Fleming to "focus on sensory modality as a learning style dimension that had some pre-eminence over others" (Fleming & Mills, 1992, p.138). In researching the subject, Fleming was influenced by notions of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) that presented the various perceptual modalities (Bandler, 1985; McLeod 1990; Stirling 1987). He added an additional category, read & write to Stirling's (1987) visual, aural and kinesthetic categories. He did so because the three initial categories seemed insufficient to account for the more complex differences that he found among students in their modality preferences. The questionnaire became helpful for both the teachers, who become aware of the distribution of learning modalities in their classes, and for the learners who could find their own sensory preferences to help them make adjustments in their study habits. Therefore, we can situate the VARK questionnaire in the learner-centred approach to learning, which focuses on approaches to studying and where learners are actively involved in their learning processes. The questionnaire became especially helpful with adult learners who are used to reflecting, and working independently.

In L2 learning, little information regarding the use of learning modalities to improve language learning is found. O'Malley and Chamot (1993) state that addressing the variety of student learning styles through providing instruction via different modes (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) is helpful. Oxford and Ehrman, (1992, cited in Felder, 1995) state that students learn better if they see and hear words in the target language, and they recommend presenting the same teaching material in different ways, due to the reinforcing effect on retention. Due to the lack of more information on multimodal instruction applied

to L2 learning, we could turn to a similar teaching techniques used in L1 instruction to inform us on the usefulness of a multisensory involvement in L2 instruction. The teaching technique, called Multisensory teaching, explicitly draws attention to language form, and has proven to be helpful with L1 students.

The term multisensory can be defined as "any learning activity that includes the use of two or more sensory modalities simultaneously to take in or express information" (Birsh, 1999, p.1). The multisensory technique emphasises explicit teaching of language structure and stresses the importance of using various senses in learning. McIntyre and Pickering (1995, cited in Birsh, 1999) reviewed a number of clinical studies on the effectiveness of multisensory language teaching with students with learning disabilities. The studies employed visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile (VAKT) sensory modes, and a type of instruction that included teaching to mastery, as well as synthetic and analytic presentation. Even though the outcome of these studies contained positive results, there is still an absence of experimental evidence for the technique. The theoretical support for multisensory teaching can be drawn only indirectly, through information about cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and neuropsychology. It is therefore the concepts of memory organisation, of the patterns of neural activation and the importance of cognition and metacognition, that best explain the usefulness of multisensory techniques. For instance, when new input is presented to language learners, new neural network are established via repeated activation (practice). When attention to input (linguistic elements) is enhanced through multisensory involvement, a more explicit and extensive encoding of linguistic information occurs (Birsh, 1999). Furthermore, the memory is likely to be strengthened by a multiple representation of language in working memory, which in turn would provide a more complete storage in long-term memory.

In relation to strategy instruction, teachers can inform students on how to mentally make connections between new and old information by teaching learning strategies that correspond to the preferred sensory modes. This way, new links with existing schemata can be establish and solidified. For example, students can use their VARK learning profile as a basis on which they can create personalised strategies, for instance, reading and

verbally rehearsing information. This will activate more neurological connections, which will establish stronger links in the brain. Therefore, the next section will investigate language learning strategies and strategy instruction.

Learning Strategies and Strategy Instruction

The concepts of learning styles were defined earlier in this chapter. I will now proceed to define the terms "strategy" and "language learning strategies". The general term strategy found in the Longman Dictionary (2001) refers to: " a well-planned series of actions for achieving an aim..." or "skilful planning in general" (p. 1426). Therefore, the notions of "planning" and "actions performed to reach a goal" are very important in the definition. In the L2 literature, a number of researchers have given definitions of language learning strategies, which provided insights into the specifics of language learning strategies. For instance, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defined language learning strategies as "the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" (p.1).Oxford (1989b) states that learning strategies are "steps taken by students to enhance their own learning" and "are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement" (p.1). Mitchell and Myles (1998) describe language learning strategies as "procedures undertaken by the learner, in order to make their own language learning as effective as possible" (p. 89). It is therefore clear from the various definitions that strategies are "tools", "actions", or "skills" that facilitate learning. Furthermore, because learning strategies are complex cognitive skills, they must be practised to be learned. This can be achieved within the context of strategy training.

The research on learning strategies began in the 1970s and was influenced by developments in cognitive psychology (Williams & Burden 1997, cited in Hismanoglu, 2000). Scholars became interested in how learners processed information and in parallel they sought to understand what kind of strategies students used to learn or remember information. Therefore, they began with describing the characteristics of the successful language learners. Rubin (1975, cited in Oxford, 1994) was one of the first researchers who identified what successful language learners do to learn a second language. For

instance he found that successful L2 learners were those who had the following characteristics: they were willing to make mistakes, were accurate guessers, looked for patterns, were willing to analyse and take advantage of any opportunity to practice, were attentive to meaning, and monitored their language production. In listing these characteristics, Rubin's idea was to make these strategies available to less successful learners. Later, during the 1980s and early 1990s researchers began to focus on categorising the strategies. This led to the elaboration of taxonomies by a number of researchers (Wenden & Rubin 1987; O'Malley & Chamot 1990; Oxford 1989b; Ellis 1994, etc.). There are literally hundreds of different language learning strategies and, because the field is young, the taxonomies provided by researchers only represent tentative categorisations that still need to be tested in research. Therefore, I will only briefly summarise the field, in order to contextualise and discuss a number of important strategies.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) divided language learning strategies into three general categories: cognitive, metacognitve, and social/affective strategies. Oxford (1989b, pp.18-21) in her book *Language learning strategies*: *What every teacher should know* made a distinction between direct and indirect strategy. The direct strategy refers to cognition, which has to do with directly processing the language and the indirect strategy refers to metacognition, which is thinking about language processing. An example of direct strategy would be a cognitive strategy like practising and an example of an indirect strategy would be a metacognitive strategy like evaluating learning. Oxford divided the two classes into six general groups (memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social), and subdivided them into 19 strategy groups. Of the six groups, I will consider only three because of their relevance to the present study: (1) memory strategies; (2) cognitive strategies; and (3) metacognitive strategies. Memory strategies help develop mental links and encode the information in long-term memory. Some memory strategies are: ordering, making associations and grouping, using images and drawings, making spatial arrangements, using keywords. Regarding these strategies, it is essential that the association created be personalised to become meaningful to students. Cognitive strategies involve the direct manipulation of language, for instance analysing, structuring, practising, reasoning, or creating structure for input or output. Cohen (1996)

refers to cognitive strategies as: "the identification, retention, storage, or retrieval of words, phrases, and other elements of the second language" (p. 4). Metacognitive strategies have an executive function; they "allow students to plan, control, and evaluate their learning" and constitute a very important notion in strategy instruction because, in combining different "attended thinking and reflective processes" (Anderson, 2002, p.1) they can act as a manager of strategies. Anderson goes on to say that the use and control of cognitive processes may be one of the most important skills that a second language learner can learn to develop. The reason is that this ability to organise, evaluate, and monitor a number of strategies can make a big difference, especially if it is combined with reflection, where learners attempt to evaluate how effective their choice of learning strategies is.

The concept of metacognition (or metacognitive strategies) was operationalised within the context of two action studies (cited in Lessard-Clouton, 1997, p. 36). The following is a brief outline of these two studies that underscore the importance of metacognition in language learning. Nunan (1996) utilised what he called "guided reflection" to ask his students to write a journal in which they had to complete the following sentences: "this week I studied..., I learned..., My difficulties are... I would like to know...,". Matsumoto (1996) also used student journals as well as questionnaires and interviews to perform her research and help her students engage in metacognitive reflection. These examples show different ways to promote learner reflection, that is, thinking about what happens during the language learning process. Anderson (2002) believes that such reflection leads to the development of stronger learning skills. He argues that metacognitive strategies that manage learning have a very important role to play in language learning. Therefore, if students become competent in using their own metacognition to regulate their use of language learning strategies, they can improve their language learning. It is thus vital that teachers train students to use metacognitive control (critical control) to manage learning strategies. This can be achieved through strategy instruction.

The role of L2 teachers in providing strategy instruction is to know about their students, in terms of their interests, motivations and learning styles, and to train them to

adopt adequate learning strategies. Learning style assessment is very important in strategy training because, as Brown (1991) argues, learning strategies do not operate by themselves but are directly linked to the students' learning styles (cited in Cohen, 1996). Furthermore, learning styles determine the choice of L2 learning strategies (Oxford, 1994).

Before going further, I will review the definition concerning the difference between learning strategies and learning styles. According to Riding and Rayner (1998), the main difference is that "strategies can be learned and modified while style is a relatively fixed core characteristic of an individual" (cited in Rieben, 2000, p. 4). Strategy instruction can be defined as a teaching approach that aims at leading students into a proactive reflection regarding the ways in which they learn. It also entails the presentation and explanation of the purpose and use of language learning strategies and the provision of opportunities for practice. Cohen (1998) believes that if students understand the reasons why they use language learning strategies, they will be in a position to evaluate and monitor their own learning. Consequently, they will be more active in the learning process and will therefore efficiently use strategies to improve language learning and performance (cited in Kinoshita 2004, p. 1). To be successful, strategy instruction requires that a number of principles be met. Oxford (1994) summarises them as follows: (1) L2 strategy training should be based on the needs, attitudes and beliefs of students; (2) students should use strategies that support each other; (3) the choice of strategies should fit the students' learning styles; (4) training should be provided regularly and over a long period of time; (5) training should include explanations and reference material; (6) affective issues like anxiety, motivations and interests should be addressed; (7) strategy training should be explicit; (8) strategy training should be individualised; (9) and strategy training should include evaluation of the progress or the success of the training.

An example of a model of strategy instruction in L2 learning, is the CALLA, the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach by Chamot and O'Malley (1986). The model was updated in 1999 and presented in a handbook (Chamot et al., 1999). The model involves explicit learning strategies instruction. The sequence of instruction comprises five teaching phases (preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation and

expansion), which are helpful to organise instruction. The CALLA model was based on research with adult learners of English. Grenfell and Harris (1999) and Macaro (2001) adapted the model to teach French and Spanish (cited in Harris, 2003, p.5) to secondary school students. The adapted model makes provisions for additional strategy practice into the five teaching phases already present in the initial model. This addition emphasises the importance of automatising learning strategies, through practice and instruction (Cottrell 1999, cited in Rasekh & Ranjbary, 2003). Another important concept of the CALLA is scaffolding, where teachers are initially involved in helping students choose and apply learning strategies and decrease their support as the learner becomes more effective and autonomous. Also, the CALLA model is based on Anderson's (1985) cognitive framework, which (as already discussed at the beginning of the present chapter) relies on the distinction between declarative and procedural knowledge. The distinction between declarative and procedural knowledge is necessary to explain automatisation of cognitive skills.

Even though there are a variety of ways to define or implement strategy instruction in a L2 classroom, in the present study, strategy instruction refers to a teaching process, which aims at discovering the individual VARK perceptual learning profile of students, followed by teaching on how to use corresponding learning strategies, and providing opportunities for practise. Therefore, in providing instruction and supervision, the teacher becomes a facilitator who coaches students to successfully use language learning strategies.

Existing Research on Strategy Instruction and Learning Strategies

In strategy instruction, research has shown that it is better for students to "develop their learning strategy repertoire while learning the target language at the same time" (Cohen, 1998 as cited in Harris, 2003, p.2). Therefore, the following studies were performed within the context L2 classroom instruction (mainly grammar-based classes) and demonstrate the successful use of strategy training.

Dreyer and Oxford (1996) conducted a study, which aimed at discovering whether there was a relationship between learning strategy use (as well as other learner variables) and ESL proficiency. They also examined the type of strategies used by students according to the different courses in which they were placed: a grammar-based course (containing more proficient learners) and a communication-based course (containing less proficient learners). The study took place at the Potchefstroom University in South Africa with 305 students who were placed in the two courses. Six different instruments were used to find out about the characteristics of students. The instruments used were: "Gottschaldt Figures Test, High School Personality Questionnaire, Strategy Inventory for Language Learning" (SILL), "Jung Personality Questionnaire" (p.67) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). It was found that "45% of the total variance in TOEFL", (p. 71) (a test that indicates ESL proficiency) was predicted by the learning strategies on the SILL, with metacognitive strategies accounting for "41.1% of the total ESL proficiency variance" (p.71). It was also found, that "language proficiency and strategy use" (p. 60) were strongly related. These results show that metacognitive learning strategies are good predictors of ESL proficiency. Concerning the comparison of the types of course in relation to the strategy use, it was found that the grammar-based class used strategies significantly more often than the communicative class. Based on the SILL categories the results of the two classes are compared : "using your mental processes/cognitive strategies (57% vs. 30%); compensating for missing knowledge/compensation strategies (30% vs. 21%); and organising and evaluating your learning/metacognitive strategies (85% vs. 20%)" (p.72). Therefore, students who were enrolled in the analytical grammar-based class, and who were more proficient on the TOEFL, used strategies that were likely to be helpful in a structured-type of ESL instruction that demands analytical skills. In contrast, the less proficient learners in the communicative type of instruction (and less proficient learners) used fewer of these strategies. Another important finding was the discovery that the social strategies (learning with others) in the communicative class were used statistically more often in this class at a rate of 46% compared to the grammar-based class who used them at a rate of 26 %. This suggests that the environment and the type of instruction has a relationship to strategy choice (Oxford, 1989b). These results are relevant to the present study, which is grammar-based and which encourages cognitive and

metacognitive strategy use. Another study, which also demonstrates the positive effect of using learning strategies on grammar tasks is the following study by Cohen, Weaver and Li (1998).

Cohen, Weaver, and Li (1998, cited in Robinson 2001) conducted a study on strategy training with foreign language learners at an American university. The aim of the research was to test the effectiveness of strategy training and the use of strategies related to speaking performance. A total of 55 students were divided into two classes of intermediate Norwegian learners and four classes of intermediate French learners. These classes were designated as either experimental or comparison classes. The experimental classes received strategy instruction which included "not only the typical presentation, discussion, promotion, and practice of strategies, but also the added element of explicit (as well as implicit) integration of training into the very fabric of the instructional program" (p.347). Oxford's (1989b) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was administered for information on speaking performance. The learners completed three speaking tasks in a language laboratory and filled out corresponding strategy checklists made for the specific tasks. Overall, the experimental classes performed significantly better on one of the three tasks, and especially on a subscales called "Grammar on the City Description", which was significantly higher than the mean scores of the experimental group. Another important finding of the study was the relationship between improvements in the task performance and the greater amount of use of various strategies as shown on the strategy checklists.

Rasekh and Ranjbary (2003) performed a study on strategy training in the context of an intensive 10-week English course in Tehran Institute of Technology with 53 students, whose ages ranged from 19 to 25 years old. The aim of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of "explicit metacognitive strategies training on vocabulary learning of the EFL students" (p.11). The participants, were classified at the pre-intermediate level of proficiency and were assigned to either a control or an experimental group. For both groups, a textbook was used, which emphasised the importance of lexical knowledge in learning English, and which included sections on strategies that applied to learning vocabulary. Only the experimental group received metacognitive strategy training during

training, which was based on the CALLA model (Chamot & O'Malley, 1986). The explicit metacognitive strategy training had a significant effect on the improvement of the students' vocabulary learning. The results of this study therefore support other findings by Cohen, Weaver, & Li (1998) and Wenden (1998, as cited in Rasekh & Ranjbary, 2003), which also involved explicitly teaching learning strategies and which also showed the positive impact of learning strategies on language learning.

The findings of these studies have implications for teachers and learners. It shows that strategy instruction can have an impact on language learning and that teachers can help learners use cognitive and metacognitive strategies to facilitate language learning. One objective of strategy instruction is to make students aware of learning strategies and give them opportunities to practice and discuss strategies in the classroom. Strategy instruction needs to be well planned, strategies should be introduced systematically, and above all, metacognition which amounts to thinking about how to perform a skill (Schraw, 2001), needs to be promoted in class. This will ensure that learners have a thorough understanding of these tools designed to facilitate learning.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed existing literature on focus on form, learning style, and learning strategies, in the context of L2 classroom strategy instruction. The literature was presented within the framework of the cognitive theory, which supports learning strategy instruction. The remainder of this thesis reports on a study that investigates the effects of strategy instruction on the acquisition of the present perfect tense with adult ESL students. The strategy instruction entails the adoption of learning strategies that match the VARK perceptual learning profile of students.

CHAPTER 3

Study Design

As a L2 teacher, I was interested in examining the link between learning strategies and learning styles and in providing a type of strategy instruction that was both practical and effective. A review of the literature and a pilot study performed in the fall 2002 led me to the approach presented in this thesis. I sensed that helping learners identify their learning styles and teaching them to adopt corresponding learning strategies could enhance their learning experience. Teaching learning strategies in the context of learning style is evident to Dearing (1997), who in his report states that in order to be effective, learners should be taught to understand their learning styles and be given resources that match or accommodate their learning preferences.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this case study is to investigate the effects of a Strategy Instruction Approach on the acquisition of an English verb tense (the present perfect) with three adult learners enrolled in an intermediate ESL grammar class in a private setting. The aim is to examine the effects of teaching learners to employ strategies that match their preferred learning style in terms of VARK perceptual learning style profile. Researchers like Schmeck (1988) emphasise the need to understand learning strategies in the context of learning styles. It is therefore important to examine the link between learning strategies and learning styles more closely.

The specific questions to be addressed in this study are the following:

1) *What are the effects of a Strategy Instruction Approach that teaches learners to adopt strategies that match their learning modalities?*
2) *Does this approach facilitate learning and, if so, what is the nature of that help?*

Context of the Study

The study was conducted in a business context in Drummondville, Quebec. I, the teacher/researcher, performed the teaching and conducted the research alone. Therefore, I was involved in the study but without collecting data on myself. The emphasis of the instruction was on reviewing verb tenses and on learning a target verb tense (the present perfect tense) with the help of learning strategies. The classes took place at the workplace (in the evening), and the students participated on a voluntary basis. L2 students in central Quebec rarely have the opportunity to speak English and it is estimated that the French speaking town of Drummondville, with a population of about 45 000, only contains about 1000 anglophones.

Participants

The participants in this study were three adult females attending an ESL course entitled Intermediate Level 1. At the time of the study, the students had already attended three14-week sessions (Beginner Level 1, 2, 3) with me as their instructor, as I offered these classes at their work place through my private language school. At the time of the study, all three participants had learned some English in high school (for an average of five years). Their first language was French and their education varied; one held a high school diploma and two completed a university certificate in administration. In general the participants had little opportunity to use English outside of the classroom. The main reason that they were taking the course was to be able to communicate in English when vacationing outside of Quebec, whether in other Canadian provinces or in English-speaking countries. The requirement to enrol in this course was the successful completion of the Beginner Level 3 course, with a minimum of 75% on the posttest. All three learners had obtained a mark above that score in the previous session.

The Instruments

For this study, two types of instruments were used: the testing instruments and the teaching instruments. The instruments are: (1) the CELSA (Combined English Language Skills in a Reading Context (Appendix C, sample of CELSA); (2) the VARK (visual, aural, read & write, and kinesthetic) Questionnaire (Appendix D); (3) the background

questionnaire (Appendix E); (4) the baseline questionnaire (Appendix F); (5) a strategy use checklist (Appendix G); (6) the pretest and the posttest (present perfect tense versus the simple past tense) (Appendix H, pretest); (7) a journal (Appendix I); (7) and interview transcripts[1]. The teaching materials are: (1) the training (course content) (Appendix J); (2) the Quiz (Appendix K); and the Verb Disc (Appendix L).

The CELSA

The CELSA (Combined English Language Skills in a Reading Context) (Ilyin, 1991) is a standardised test (see Appendix C for a sample), designed to place students into various ability levels in adult ESL classes. The test consists of two (equivalent) forms that each contains 75 items, and that measures: reading comprehension and grammar in context. ESL classroom teachers, in a number of steps, developed it. For instance, there was the elaboration of banks of item (developed for each proficiency level), and the verification that the content of the tests corresponded to adult ESL curriculum across the United States and Canada. Concerning construct validity, it was established through an item analysis, performed over a number of years, which yielded information on "item discrimination power, item difficulty level, and item significance for each ability group" (Ilyin et al., 1992, p. 11). Therefore, high quality items were obtained. The test was also reviewed by experts who found that the texts were natural, authentic, and conformed to texts and curriculum used in seven proficiency levels in adult ESL schools. The seven proficiency levels are as follows: (1) lower beginners, (2) upper beginners, (3) pre-intermediate, (4) lower intermediate, (5) upper intermediate (6) lower advanced, (7) and upper advanced. I used the CELSA to provide a standard measure of the participants' English proficiency at the onset of the study. The CELSA user's guide reports reliability, using Cronbach Coefficient Alpha for CELSA 1 and CELSA 2 at .95 (Ilyn et al., 1992).

The VARK Questionnaire

The VARK Questionnaire (Appendix D) (Fleming, 1992) provides a learner profile in terms of sensory modalities (visual, aural, read/write and kinesthetic). The four senses through which information can be apprehended are seen as "doors" whereby information

[1] Author can be contacted to obtain interview transcripts.

comes in and is processed by the cognitive capacities of the learner. I elected to use the inventory because it is efficient to administer, generates metacognitive awareness and promotes reflection about learning. The questionnaire comprises 13 questions, which I translated into French because I felt that the learners would be more comfortable answering in their mother tongue. Regarding the instructional preferences categories, Fleming defines them as follows:

1) The visual sensory modality represents a preference for information in charts, graphs, flow charts, symbolic arrows, drawings or other devices used to represent what could have been presented in words.
2) The aural modality describes a preference for information that is spoken or heard. Learners with an aural modality learn best from lectures, tutorials or talking to other students.
3) The read & write modality represents a preference for information that is written.
4) The kinesthetic modality refers to the perceptual preference related to the use of experience and practice (simulated or real).

As already mentioned in chapter two, VARK is not a diagnostic instrument, but rather an advisory instrument, which was developed to lead to metacognitive reflection. The questionnaire provides a profile made up of four scores. It is important not to describe learners modalities in terms of a single label (such as visual or aural) but rather in terms of profile, because, taken together, the four scores are more precise to describe the modality. This is because, in a majority of cases, the learning style profiles of students are multimodal, which means that a combination of preferred senses are found for each student. For instance, a student can have a VA (visual, aural) learning style profile, while another may present a VAK (visual, aural, kinesthetic) profile. Fleming (2002) states that modal preferences of students are rarely singular, and that multimodal (i.e., bi-, tri- or quad) preferences are likely to be the norm The instrument was not designed to be reliable in terms of consistency of scores, because learning profiles are unstable and subject to change over a long period of time. For instance, some modes may become stronger and some weaker over the years; however, if a test-retest occurs within a few weeks the scores

should remain similar. VARK's content validity is strong because when it was tested against students' perceptions of themselves, the instrument was found to be consistent (Fleming, 2001). For instance, Fleming states that during its "development at Lincoln University, New Zealand students indicated that it matched their perceptions of their preferences and, more importantly, matched the strategies associated with their preferences" (p. 50).

The background questionnaire

The background questionnaire (Appendix E) was adapted from Oxford (1989b). I translated it into French so that the participants could fully understand the terminology employed. The instrument provides additional insight on student characteristics and opinions concerning their language learning experience. The first and the last section consist of open-ended questions to collect general information on participants. The second section includes items on a Likert scale, to incite learners to rate themselves on: (1) their opinion regarding their English proficiency level, (2) the importance they give to becoming proficient in English, (3) and the reasons why they want to learn English.

The baseline questionnaire

The pretest /postest baseline questionnaire (Appendix F) was designed by me, the teacher/researcher. The questionnaire served to explicitly introduce the concepts of information processing, cognition, metacognition, learning styles and strategies. It also was a useful tool to spark discussions on the first and the last day of class. Furthermore, it served as a source of additional insight into the metacognitive changes that occurred during the 13 weeks of the study. This is important because strategy instruction includes metacognitive awareness. The open-ended nature of the questionnaire was important to allow learners to freely express their views on the questions asked. The first part of the questionnaire consists of open-ended questions, which sought to determine what learners know concerning memory, cognition, VARK learning profile and learning strategies. The last question is graded on a Likert scale and ranges from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very much) in reference to the degree of importance that learners give to reasons that help them learn English. I developed the questionnaire on the advice of Neil Fleming (personal

communication, September 16, 2002) who suggested that I establish clear baseline data about my students before they start.

The strategy use checklist

I developed the 14-week strategy use checklist (Appendix G) to collect information regarding the use of strategies during the study and to examine the link between learning strategies and learning styles more closely. The content of the checklist was based on issues discussed in the literature review (e.g., matching learning strategies to learning style). I developed the checklist, using for each of the four VARK (visual, aural, read & write, kinesthetic) categories, four different learning strategies, for a total of 16 different strategies. For example, in the visual learning strategy category, learning strategy #1 refers to: making a diagram and, in the read & write category, strategy #12 refers to: rewrite ideas and principles in your own words. The strategies that I chose corresponded to cognitive, metacognitive and memory strategies, in terms of Oxford's (1989b) taxonomy (see Table 1). Therefore, the aim of the checklist was to record the strategy use and consists of a grid that presents: (1) on the vertical plane, the 16 learning strategies classified within the VARK categories, and (2) on the horizontal plane, columns for the 14 weeks. The learners' role was to write a check mark every time they used a strategy during their study time. I chose to develop the checklist because during strategy instruction, the 16 strategies were to be presented in class, along with their purpose and use. Therefore, the checklist was a means to monitor strategy use during the session. Another reason for using this checklist was based on the opinion of Oxford (1989b) who argues that a checklist helps students, in a structured way, to reflect on their strategy use. Therefore, the students filled out the checklist every week, and the answers were discussed during class. The checklist also provided information regarding the changes that occurred during the study. Initially, the checklist was designed to gather information for a period of 14 weeks; however, the class was able to complete the session in 13 weeks.

The pretest and the posttest[2]

The pretest and the posttest (Appendix H) consist of two similar achievement tests (Forms 1 and 2) that I designed to assess student progress on the learning objectives of the study. The tests contain 85 items, which are divided in two sections. Section 1 comprises five sub-sections containing 35 items and section 2 contains 50 discrete items. Section 1 was designed to elicit a set of facts (declarative knowledge) concerning the present perfect. It tests the following: (1) the form, (2) the key words and, (3) the comprehension of the relevant principles related to the use of the present perfect. Section 2 was designed to apply the information in context. Students take the verb, provided in parentheses and convert it to the simple past or the present perfect, according to the context. The total score of the test is 85, and was converted into a percentage to facilitate analysis.

Table 1
Learning Strategies Corresponding to the Learning Modalities

	VISUAL LEARNING STRATEGIES	TYPE OF STRATEGY
1	Diagrams, flow charts or different spatial arrangements	memory strategy
2	Underlining and use of different colours	cognitive strategy
3	Using key words or symbols	memory strategy
4	Using drawings	cognitive strategy
	AURAL LEARNING STRATEGIES	**TYPE OF STRATEGY**
5	Ask yourself a question and answer it	cognitive strategy
6	Retire in a quiet place to concentrate and study	metacognitive strategy
7	Repeat and rehearse the information orally	cognitive strategy
8	Discuss the information or ask questions to the teacher	cognitive strategy
	READ & WRITE LEARNING STRATEGIES	**TYPE OF STRATEGY**
9	Read and re-read your notes (paying attention)	metacognitive strategy
10	Write your notes again and again	cognitive strategy
11	Play with words. Make lists, arrange words into hierarchies	cognitive strategy
12	Rewrite ideas and principles in your own words	cognitive strategy
	KINESTHETIC LEARNING STRATEGIES	**TYPE OF STRATEGY**
13	Use many examples	cognitive strategy
14	Do many exercises	cognitive strategy
15	Info. transfer (from the Verb Disc to grids or flash cards)	cognitive/memory
16	Practice information (pretend you are talking to someone & use the information or attempt to explain something to someone).	cognitive strategy

[2] Author can be contacted to obtain the posttest.

To assure construct validity, the tests were developed to contain representative items of the syllabus. This was done using a table of specifications (Table 2). The table corresponded to the instructional objectives (Table 3) of the portion of the class on the present perfect (*the training session part B)* (Table 4). The instructional objectives were classified in the cognitive domain of the taxonomy according to Bloom. The table of specifications reflects the emphasis given to each item during instruction.

Table 2
Table of Specifications for the Pretest and Posttest for the Cognitive Domain

OUTCOME / CONTENT	KNOW	COMPREHEND	APPLY	TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS
The form of the present perfect	18			18
The key words of the present perfect	14			14
The use of the present perfect		3		3
The use of the present perfect in context vs.			40	40
The use of the simple past in context			10	10
Total number of items				85

Table 3
Statement of the Learning Outcomes in the Achievement Test

At the end of the training on the present perfect, the participants will demonstrate that they:

1. **Know the specific facts about the present perfect.**[3]
   - 1.1 write the form of the present perfect
   - 1.2 write the key words of the present perfect
2. **Comprehend the relevant principles of the use of the present perfect.**
   - 2.1 Describe, the 3 cases when the present perfect is used
3. **Apply the rules of the present perfect in context.**
   - 3.1 Demonstrate that they can convert the simple forms of the verbs (given in parentheses) to the simple past or present perfect- according to the context and key words.

[3] Know: remembering previously learned material.
Comprehend: grasping the meaning of material.
Apply: using information in concrete situations.

Table 4
Conceptual Model of the Study

PRE-SESSION STAGE
CELSA VARK questionnaire Discussion Background questionnaire Baseline questionnaire (pretest)
THE TRAINING STAGE
PART A Strategy training applied to reviewing verb tenses Use of the learner modality to review the verb tenses Journal writing 14-week strategy use checklist Review quizzes Discussions Exercises in context
PART B Pretest (the present perfect vs. the simple past) Strategy training applied to the present perfect Journal writing Discussions Review tests Exercises in context
POST SESSION STAGE
Posttest (the present perfect vs. the simple past) The baseline questionnaire (posttest) Discussion

Concerning the difficulty level, the content of the tests are based on a structural view of language and were designed to correspond to the proficiency level of intermediate adult ESL learners. A verification of the sequence of presentation of English grammar in the CELSA user's guide (Ilyin et al.,1992) confirmed that the present perfect corresponded to an intermediate level of instruction for adult ESL learners (Ilyin herself inquired whether the CELSA contained items that were representative of the curriculum, and ESL instructors reported that the CELSA contained material that corresponded to their Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced levels of instruction).

Before piloting, Form 1 and Form 2 were reviewed by an anglophone academic who pointed out that a lack of context made the choice between the present perfect and the simple past ambiguous. The tests were reworked and a second draft was produced. The tests were piloted on three francophones who provided comments. In the light of their comments, I changed the following points: the provision of longer lines for answers, more context to fully understand the sentences and the verb tenses to be used, and a more authentic context. The test contains a total of 85 items providing an adequate sample for the behaviour measured. These items were matched to the specific learning tasks (using a sufficient number of items for each learning tasks). I wrote items that called for the desired behaviour, which are : *to know* the form and the key words of the present perfect tense, *to comprehend* the use of the present perfect tense, and *to apply* the use of the present perfect versus the use of the simple past tense in context (see Table 2).

The journal

The journal (Appendix I) contains seven open-ended questions. I designed the journal to engage my students in metacognitive reflection, which is an essential part of strategy instruction. The model for the questions was inspired by Nunan (1996) who designed a number of questions to guide the reflection of his students during an action research (see chapter 2). My aim was to lead students to a conscious awareness of their use of learning strategies through questions that would help them evaluate whether or not their strategy use was effective. Anderson (2002) argues that by examining and monitoring their use of learning strategies, students have more chances of success in meeting their learning goals (cited in Rasekh & Ranjbary, 2003). Therefore, the journal was used as an instrument to make students pause and reflect on their strategy use, and the content of the journal served as stimulus for class discussions.

Class interviews

Class interviews were performed throughout the study[4]. Interview 1 was initially conducted to elicit information to validate the VARK questionnaire: four written questions were given and the participants were free to respond orally in French or in English. The

[4] Author can be contacted to obtain interview transcripts (1,2,3,4,5)

first two questions elicited personal information to identify the learners and the two remaining questions enquired whether the learners agreed with the results of the questionnaire. Interviews 2, 3, 4 and 5 were performed during the session at regular intervals and consisted of students sharing the content of their journals. A list of seven questions was provided (Appendix I), which served as a guideline for journal reflection. Therefore, the participants were free to discuss answers to these questions or, if they had something more pertinent to share, were allowed to do so. That is to say that the interviews were not uniquely based on the seven questions and that participants felt free to share their comments on strategy use. This, I believe, enriched the data. The discussions were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The respondents' names in the transcripts are pseudonyms.

Materials

The course content

The course content (see Appendix J for a sample) was designed to provide an analysis of the language (the verb tenses) to be learned, in terms of grammatical structures (Ellis, 1993) and strategy instruction. The course is organised around three major areas which are: (1) strategy instruction, (2) verb tense review and, (3) the present perfect. I designed the materials for both, area 1 and 3, and used some exercises in context drawn from the book *Fundamentals of English Grammar* (Azar, 1992) to review already known verb tenses. Therefore, each week, students were provided with handouts concerning the areas mentioned above. It is important to mention that area 1 (strategy instruction) was applied throughout the session. Concerning area 1, the materials (Appendix J) on strategy instruction consist of handouts, which (regarding class #2) contained explicit information on information processing, on the four VARK sensory modalities, and on the 16 learning strategies. An exercise was also included in which students could practice their personalised choice of learning strategies. Area 2 presents the strategy application to facilitate the study of the form, key words and usage of the verb tenses (e.g., class #3). The verb tense review is introduced, along with exercises in context. The verb tenses are the

simple present, the simple past, the present progressive, the past progressive, the future with *will*, and the future with *going to*. The materials also contain weekly review quizzes to assess whether the form, the key words and the usage of the verb tenses have been internalised with the help of the learning strategies. Area 3 consists of materials that explained the form, key words and use of the target verb tense (the present perfect) (e.g., class #8 & #9) and provided grids to practice the target verb tense and using learning strategies that had been practised in the previous classes. Furthermore, texts were provided to use the target verb tense in context (e.g., class #10).

The Verb Disc

The Verb Disc (Appendix L) is a study instrument, which I designed to facilitate learning and to aid in the process of internalising verb tense structures and irregular verbs. The Verb Disc is made up of three connected wheels: an inner wheel and two covers. The covers contain windows to see the information printed on the inner wheel. Side ''B'' contains a list of 120 irregular verbs in the following forms: (1) the simple form, (2) the simple past, (3) the past participle, as well as (4) a French translation for each verb. The irregular verbs section is coded in yellow. On side ''A'' the verbs are conjugated in the affirmative and interrogative forms. The verbs "to be" and "to have" are conjugated in the simple present and the simple past tense. The verb "to talk" acts as a model of conjugation for all other tenses. The Verb Disc contains a colour-coded grouping of verb tenses. For example, the section on the simple present is orange and the section on the simple past is tan. The purpose of the colours is to aid learners to quickly locate the verb tenses on side "A" to match them to corresponding information on side "B" (key words and usage) to each verb tense. Written information concerning the different verb tenses is made salient along the circumference of the disc. Thus, learners can match the information written on both sides, not only using the colour coding but also the written form.

In a pilot study (Bourgeois, 2002), I investigated the effects of a strategy instruction approach that included a multimodal presentation of course content on the acquisition of grammar with eleven adult ESL learners. The approach utilised the Verb Disc as a learning instrument.

In the contributing factors to the improvement of scores, I found that the following concerning the Verb Disc:

-55% of the students reported using it as a reference tool.

-54.5% of the students reported that it helped them moderately to very much.

-36% of the students reported using it as an aid to study (internalise) verbs.

Procedures

The conceptual model of the study consisted of three main sections: the pre-session, the in-session and the post-session (Table 4). The pre-session stage was designed to describe the learner before the training in terms of level of English grammatical proficiency, and VARK learning profile, and to provide baseline data concerning strategy use and knowledge on the concepts of cognition and learning strategies. The training stage was divided in two sections: part A and B. Part A served to provide both strategy training applied to reviewing the verb tenses and discussions on the learning strategy use. Part B was designed to provide a score on the pretest (present perfect vs. simple past) and to apply strategy training to learning the present perfect (the target verb tense). The post-session stage was designed to determine whether there was an improvement of score on the present perfect vs. simple past test and provide discussions and information on the strategy and baseline questionnaires.

I used quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions. Less formal discussions and comments from the participants also contributed to the database. The participants offered comments, which I noted and used as a supplement to the audio recording to provide deeper insight to the final analysis. They were a valuable source of information because they were spontaneous events that occurred during class and contained rich information.

At the onset of the session, the test designed for placement of adult students in ESL/EFL programs, the CELSA (Combined English Language Skills in a Reading

Context) was administered to identify the proficiency level of the participants. The three participants' performance indicated that they were within the intermediate range of grammar proficiency. Two participants were 45 years old and the third one was 48. All three students were invited and agreed to participate in this study. They were given information on the purpose of the research and were assured that both confidentiality and anonymity would be preserved as mentioned in the consent form (Appendix B). They were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice, and that their names would be changed to maintain their privacy. Therefore, their pseudonyms are as follows: Sonia, Denise and Julie. Ethical procedures were followed and conformed to the guidelines of the Faculty of Education, McGill University (Appendix A).

The training consisted of one three-hour session of English instruction per week for 13 weeks. The strategy training involved a number of training procedures which included: (1) explicit instruction; (2) discussions on the purpose and use of the strategies; (3) strategy practice; (4) metacognitive awareness; (5) materials sequenced in difficulty; (6) practice in context; and (6) a gradual change from initial support (in strategy use) to student control.

The training stage proceeded as follows. During part A of the training stage, I provided the information on the cognitive theoretical frame and explained the four VARK sensory modalities. To explain the links between the input, the learning modalities and the cognitive processes, I presented the learners with a diagram (Appendix J). For instance, I explained that information (input) first came through the senses and was then processed by the brain. I then elaborated on the concept of matching learning strategies to learning modalities and introduced learners to the use of the 16 learning strategies (see Appendix G for a list of the strategies). The instructional framework for strategy instruction was adapted from the instructional sequence in the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (the CALLA) (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). The strategy instruction involved various training procedures including explicit instruction on the use of the strategies, metacognitive awareness, and an initial assistance in strategy use gradually replaced by students' autonomy in strategy use. As they would study at home, learners would choose their own combination of learning strategies to review the verb tenses that they had learnt in previous sessions. They would also fill out the strategy use checklist (Appendix G) and

make entries in their journals. Finally, exercises in context (the procedural knowledge) were given every week for practice. In both parts A and B of the training stage, discussions gave learners the opportunity to share the content of their weekly journals. This led to metacognitive reflection. A quiz was provided occasionally to verify if learners had internalised the form, the key words and the use of the different verb tenses (Appendix K). At the onset of part B, during the training and after the pretest, learners were presented with the target verb tense, (the present perfect tense) (Appendix J). Participants were then directed to apply their preferred combination of learning strategies to internalise the form, the key words and the use of that same tense. Finally, exercises on the present perfect allowed learners to practice the new information.

Data Analysis

To determine the effects of the strategy instruction approach that involved matching learning strategies to learning modalities, I gathered data from the testing instruments as well as from audio recordings and questionnaires. I used quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyse the data in reference to the areas of inquiry listed at the beginning of the chapter.

I analysed quantitative data using frequency counts (from the strategy use checklist, Appendix G), percentages and a t-test (from the pretest and posttest, Appendix H). I then analysed the qualitative data looking for recurrent themes across the three learners as they shared the content of their journals and participated in class discussions. In the analysis, I also included any pertinent information that learners offered as they were creating meaning for themselves during strategy instruction. I felt that this would give a complementary perspective to the case study.

The data analysis may have been more reliable if a second researcher had been involved in this process to confirm any findings. Because I did not know anyone, however, who understood the topic as well as I did, I felt more comfortable to perform the analysis alone.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the study design in the following order: the purpose and research questions, the context, the participants, the instruments, the teaching materials, the procedures, and the data analysis. The next chapter (chapter 4) is a presentation and discussion of the results of this study in relation to the research questions stated at the beginning of the present chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Presentation and Discussion of Results

This chapter is divided into two sections: (1) the presentation and discussion of results in relation to Research Question #1; and (2) the presentation and discussion of results in relation to Research Question #2. I used both quantitative and qualitative methods to perform the analysis of individual participants. For instance, I used the percentage of improvement between the pretest and posttest, the VARK learning profile, and the percentage of strategy use for each visual, aural, read & write and kinesthetic category. I then completed the information with quotes from the interviews and from students' personal journals (Appendix I), which I cite without correcting grammatical errors.

The Research Questions

The two research questions served as guidelines to discover relevant patterns that emerged. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects that the strategy instruction had on adult ESL learning. I will provide a presentation and a discussion of the results with respect to Research Question #1 and then with Research Question #2. The following questions served as a focus for this section of the study:

1) *What are the effects of a strategy instruction approach that teaches learners to adopt strategies that match their learning modalities?*
2) *Does this approach facilitate learning and, if so, what is the nature of that help?*

Research Question #1: Presentation of Results.

The following tables summarise information and present percentages. Table 5 provides the VARK learning profiles across learners. The numbers were calculated from the questionnaire, following the VARK guidelines, and were then converted to percentages to facilitate comparisons with other tables. This was done using Fleming's (2001) guidelines on how to calculate individual learning profiles. The process entails using the results of the questionnaire, and calculating a total of four scores (a score for each of the four VARK modalities). These scores establish the preferences of students in terms of

profiles. For instance, a learner may have a profile of: V:10; A:0; R:2; K:1; which, according to Fleming's classification falls within the label of a *very strong visual preference.* However, as Fleming explains, it is preferable to refer to learning modality profiles in terms of scores rather than labels. This is because, even though the learner is labelled visual because of the elevated visual score, this does not tell much about the rest of the profile, which also contains a read & write score (i.e., R: 2) and a kinesthetic score (K: 1). For example, Denise's VARK profile is *very strong Aural*, with a score of: V:0, A:10, R: 4, K1. Therefore, even though she is labelled *very strong Aural*, her read & write number (i.e., R: 4) indicates that she also uses that modality to process, practice and internalise information.

Table 5

VARK Learning Profiles Across Learners

	Sonia multimodal ARK	Denise very strong Aural	Julie multimodal VARK
Visual	1 (5.0%)	0 (0 %)	3 (17.65%)
Aural	7 (35.0%)	10 (66.67%)	5 (29.41%)
Read & write	7 (35.0%)	4 (26.67%)	4 (23.53%)
Kinesthetic	5 (25.0%)	1 (6.67%)	5 (29.41%)

During a class discussion, I validated the information obtained on the VARK questionnaire, asking whether participants agreed with their learning profiles and why. The participants expressed their opinions regarding their VARK learning profile. Both Sonia and Denise agreed with the results of their learning profile, but Julie decided to use the results that had surfaced in the previous use of the VARK questionnaire (performed on two occasions in September and January 2002). Why she opted to remain with a multimodal profile is discussed further in the present chapter.

Table 6 presents the strategies participants used over the 13 weeks, as recorded on the strategy use checklist (Appendix G). These numbers were based on the learners checking any of the 16 strategies corresponding to the four VARK modalities. The checks were added to provide a total number of strategies used for each participant. For instance, Sonia and Denise each employed a total of 37 strategies (*n = 37*) and Julie, a total of 43 strategies (*n = 43*). I converted the numbers to percentages to facilitate the analysis. Thus, Table 6 provides the distribution of the three learners according to their strategy use during the 13 week training. From Table 6, we can see that the percentage distribution of the strategy use for the three participants were: for Sonia, only the read & write (51.35%) and kinesthetic (48.65%); for Denise, visual (8.11%), aural (35.14%), read & write (24.32 %), and kinesthetic (32.43%); and for Julie, visual (7 %). aural (51.16 %), read & write (25.58 %), and kinesthetic (16.28 %).

Table 6

Distribution of 3 Learners according to Strategy Use during Strategy Instruction

	(n = 37) Sonia	*(n = 37)* Denise	*(n = 43)* Julie
Visual	0 (0%)	3 (8.11%)	3 (7.0%)
Aural	0 (0%)	13 (35.14%)	22 (51.16%)
Read & write	19 (51.35%)	9 (24.32%)	11 (25.58%)
Kinesthetic	18 (48.65%)	12 (32.43%)	7 (16.28%)

Table 7 demonstrates the rate of improvement between the pretest and posttest on the present perfect tense. To do so, I listed the scores of the pretest and the posttest across participants and calculated their individual score gain between the pretest and the posttest. Thus, Sonia improved 54.1%, Denise 33.5%, and Julie 30%.

Table 7

Scores and Total Improvement on the Prestest and the Posttest on the Present Perfect Tense across Learners

	Sonia	Denise	Julie
Pretest	44.7%	60.6%	61.2%
Posttest	98.9%	94.1%	91.25%
Total improvement	54.1%	33.5%	30.00%

Again, using the scores on the pretest and the scores on the posttest, I performed a two sample independent t-test using the software titled *Basic Statistical Analysis* (Sprinthall, 2000) to determine if the degree of improvement between the pretest and posttest was significant. An alpha level of .01, was used for the statistical test and the improvement of participants was found to be statistically significant, $t = 6.706;\ p < .01$. However, the small sample of the study cannot allow us to generalise to a population.

Discussion of Results

During strategy instruction, I encouraged students to adopt learning strategies that corresponded to their individual VARK learning profile. I also encouraged them to keep a journal to reflect on their own language learning process (via the seven questions provided in the journal, in Appendix I). Students became aware of their whole range of strategies and they gained enough metacognitive awareness to help them evaluate which strategies worked and which ones did not. Class discussions, where students shared their thoughts and discoveries, were also very helpful.

Research Question #1

1) *What are the effects of a strategy instruction approach that teaches learners to adopt strategies that match their learning modalities?*

The effects of the strategy instruction approach are described below in terms of *factors* (as revealed by the emergence of data), which taken together contributed to the

success of the strategy approach. I will therefore discuss these factors. Firstly, I will analyse students individually and, secondly, I will discuss patterns that occurred across learners.

Individual Analysis of Participants

Sonia's improvement between the pretest and posttest on the present perfect tense is 54.1% (Table 7). Sonia's profile (Table 5) is *multimodal ARK* (V: 5%; A: 35%; R: 35%; K: 25%). During the 13-week period, she used a total of 51.35% read & write strategies and 48.65 % kinesthetic strategies (Table 6). However, she did not use any strategies in the visual and aural categories, even though her VARK learning profile was visual (5%) and aural (35%). Because the percentage on her visual score on her learning profile is relatively low, I did not look into why she did not use the visual learning strategies. However, because of the elevated aural score (35%) on the learning profile, I asked her why she did not adopt any aural learning strategies. She answered with an example that had occurred in the past and stated the following (interview #1):

> Mais c'est juste que le oral il est un petit peu fort là. J'ai pas besoin de oral dans le sens que quand je suivais des cours à l'université, à Télé Université c'est sûr que j'aurais appris plus rapidement si j'avais eu un professeur qui m'aurait 'pitché' l'information au lieu de m'apporter tout cela par écrit, j'aurais aimé mieux ça. Oral, oui il faut que j'entende, mais je ne me le répèterai pas par exemple.

This statement explains that she finds her VARK aural score somewhat higher than what she thinks it should be. A possible reason for this is the fact that the results of the VARK questionnaire provide information on "instructional preference because it deals with perceptual modes..." and it focuses on " the different ways that we take in and give out information" (Fleming, 2001, p.1). Therefore, she likes to receive information through the aural channel but does not use aural strategies like repeating. Therefore, Table 6 indicates that she did not use any aural learning strategies (0%) during her study time at home. Interestingly, in January 2002, her aural score was 14.29%, on the VARK learning profile as opposed to 35% in January 2003. Finally, Sonia used a total of 51.35% read & write learning strategies (Table 6). She defined herself as a read & write learner on a few occasions during the class interviews. For instance she said: " Non, regarde ce que j'ai fait

ici, ça prouve que j'ai besoin d'écrire parce que garde, je me suis caché ça tout de suite et là j'écris. C'est vraiment la preuve que je suis read & write". (Interview #2).

An analysis of Sonia's comments (interview #4) shows evidence of metacognitive knowledge. Thus, concerning her choice of strategy #9 (read & re-read your notes) and #10 (write your notes again and again), she said:

> The form of the simple present...first time I read the word and I memorise them. After I write the word and I remember. I begin again until I remember all the words... I chose the strategy... the number #10 (write your notes again & again). Same thing from 'high up' or 'up above'. I write the key words and I learned this key word yesterday... Ça c'est #9 (read and re-read your notes) et ça c'est #10 (write your notes again and again). Ça je l'ai appris en lisant, ça je l'ai appris en écrivant.

Sonia went on to explain that when something was easy to learn she only read it; however, when it was more complex, she wrote it to internalise it. She demonstrated that she knew enough about herself to control her strategy use. She also had the ability to evaluate what worked for her. This shows evidence of metacognitive reflection. In language learning, Graham (1997) states that "the ability to choose and evaluate one's strategies is of central importance" (cited in Anderson 2002, p.4).

Denise's improvement between the pretest and the posttest on the present perfect tense was 33.5% (Table 7). Her learning profile is: *very strong aural*, (V: 0%; A: 66.67%; R: 26.67%; and K: 6.67%) (Table 5). Denise adopted 8.11% visual strategies, 35.14% aural strategies, 24.32% read & write strategies and 32.43% kinesthetic strategies (Table 6). Denise, on a few occasions, defined herself as aural and her comments demonstrate that she felt comfortable with that learning profile. For instance, during interview #1 she said the following, when asked whether she agreed with the results of the VARK Questionnaire:

> Je suis d'accord, j'ai toujours su que j'étais orale. Euh... ça toujours passé par mes oreilles pour... Il faut que je le dise et me le redise pour, pour que ça... [Rentre?]. Oui, oui, mais j'ai un petit côté... Il faut écrire aussi pour apprendre sinon...

However, her choice of learning strategies shows that she used kinesthetic strategies in a percentage that is more elevated than what the learning profile suggested. I therefore

examined the type of strategies that she used in the kinesthetic category (strategy checklist, Appendix G) and found that her use of kinesthetic strategies corresponded to two strategies: strategy #13 (use many examples) and #14 (do many exercises). Denise only began to regularly use strategy #13 (use many examples) in the last section of the training (i.e., when the present perfect tense was introduced). The regular usage pattern suggests that it had something to do with learning the target verb tense. Concerning strategy #14 (do many exercises), she used it regularly throughout the training and this was caused by the nature of the instruction, which included many exercises in the form of homework. Denise offered information regarding her choice of learning strategies, which also demonstrates metacognitive knowledge. During interview #2 she stated the following:

> ... comme quand je fais un examen là, quand tu nous donnes des tests là, il faudrait que je sois toute seule et pis que je lise les questions à voix haute (aural strategy category)...Parce que là je la lis et je la relis et tsé je vas me faire aller les lèvres même des fois pour euh... aujourd'hui je travaillais les affaires là... je le disais fort, j'étais toute seule dans mon bureau là, je le disais fort et ça allait bien...mais je le sais qu'il faut que j'écrive [read & write category] pour l'approfondir.

As can be noticed from the quote, Denise employed strategies that corresponded to her learning profile (i.e., V: 0; A: 10; R: 4; K:1) and especially the aural and read & write strategies.

Julie's improvement between the pretest and the posttest on the present perfect tense is 30% (Table 7). Her learning profile is: *multimodal VARK* (V: 17.65%; A: 29.41%; R: 23.53%; and K: 29.41% (Table 5). Julie adopted 7% visual strategies, 51.16% aural strategies, 25.58% read & write strategies and 16.28% kinesthetic strategies (Table 6). The low percentage of learning strategies she used in the visual category can be explained by the nature of the training, which already provided in the learning material a number of diagrams, key words and drawings. Julie commented on her *multimodal VARK* preference regarding the VARK questionnaire (during interview #1), and stated that she used to think that she was "a confused learner" for using four different modalities (methods) to learn. However, with the questionnaire she realised that what she thought was confusion, was

really only a reflection of who she was as a learner (her multimodal profile). Therefore, she concluded saying that if she had more time she would equally use the four different ways to learn (visual, aural, read & write and kinesthetic). Thus she said:

> Multimodal parce que je me rends compte que effectivement j'utilise les quatre méthodes [VARK], moi je pensais que j'étais mélangée, c'est parce que je n'avais pas de méthode, mais là je me rends compte que j'utilise vraiment les quatre. Je vais le dire [aural] et je le photographie [visual] en l'apprenant, après ça je vais le revirer à l'envers en l'écrivant [read & write] pour voir ce que je me suis souvenue et je vais aller jusque dans la pratique [kinesthetic]...j'utiliserais autant les quatre [modalities]. donc, je les brasses de tous les côtés, de toutes les façons pour savoir qu'est-ce que j'ai retenu et qu'est-ce que je n'ai pas retenu.

In her journal regarding her own learning process during week #10 as she answers question #3, which asks; "Cette semaine j'ai réalisé par rapport à mon apprentissage à l'aide des stratégies que..." Julie noted: "Je fais confiance aux strategies naturelles, je commence par elles en premier." By *stratégies naturelles*, she meant the strategies that corresponded to her VARK learning profile. Julie's self awareness of individual learning patterns and her corresponding choice of strategies corresponds to Anderson's (2002) opinion when he states that "When learners reflect upon their learning strategies, they become better prepared to make conscious decisions about what they can do to improve their learning" (p.4).

Patterns Across the Three Learners

During the study the three participants had certain behaviours in common. That is, patterns surfaced across the participants, which I observed during the analysis of either the strategy checklist, class discussions or informal conversations. The patterns I found were: the transfer of strategies to a new context, the combination of two strategies to achieve learning, the use of new strategies in new contexts, the low employment of visual strategies and the elevated use of kinesthetic strategies.

The Transfer of Strategies to a New Context

An interesting pattern surfaced across the three students concerning strategy transfer to a new context. Using the conceptual model of the study (Table 4) and the strategy use checklist (Appendix G), I calculated the type of strategies that were utilised during part A (strategy training applied to reviewing verb tenses) that were transferred to part B (strategy training applied to the present perfect) of the study. By transfer of strategy type I mean, for instance, that if strategy #9 (read and re-read your notes) was used in part A of the study, it was also used in part B of the study. It is important to keep in mind that it is the transfer of strategy type and not the frequency use of individual strategies that is discussed here. This transfer of strategy type from part A to part B of the study is exemplified by the following data. Four out of eight (50%) strategies that Sonia used during part A of the study were transferred to part B. Six out of nine (66%) strategies that Diane used during part A of the study were transferred to part B. Seven out of ten (70%) strategies that Julie used during part A of the study were transferred to part B. This transfer of strategies demonstrates that students felt comfortable enough with their 'old' strategies to transfer them to new contexts. This pattern demonstrate a maintenance of strategy across time or a transfer of strategy to new contexts.

The Combination of Two Strategies to Achieve Learning

I observed a consistent pattern of combining two strategies to achieve learning across learners throughout the session. There is evidence on the strategy checklists (Appendix G) that learners (over the 13-week period) systematically used two or more learning strategies during their study time. For instance, Sonia consistently used strategy #9 (read and re-read your notes) with strategy #10 (write your notes again and again); Denise also consistently used strategy #6 (retire in a quiet place to concentrate and study) and strategy #7 (repeat and rehearse the information orally); finally Julie maintained the use of strategy #5 (ask yourself a question and answer it) and strategy #7 (repeat and rehearse the information orally) throughout the session. In their journals or during conversations students also mentioned using two or more strategies. For instance, Sonia wrote in her Journal (Appendix I): "Jai lu et relu; écrit et re-écrit et j'ai essayé de faire une structure...". During an informal discussion, Denise stated the following concerning

learning irregular verbs: "Je les récite fort sauf que je m'aperçois que je dois les écrire, cela me manque, ah c'est pas pire!". During the same discussion, Julie also made a similar comment regarding combining two strategies to achieve more effective learning, she said: "Juste les dire ok, mais il faut les écrire aussi." Thus, the students all mentioned the effectiveness of using two strategies in tandem. This concurs with findings in the literature, and especially some experiments, which according to (Mousavi, Low, & Sweller, 1995) "show that it is easier to integrate multiple sources of information during learning when the material is physically integrated auditorily and visually, than when information is presented to each modality separately" (cited in Birsh, 1999, p. 10).

The Use of New Strategies in New Contexts

During the training stage part B (learning the present perfect tense) (Table 4), strategies that had never been used before suddenly appeared. I analysed the checklists and found the following. In the kinesthetic category, two participants (Sonia and Denise) began to regularly use strategy #13 (use many examples), while Julie began to use strategy #15 (practice information transfer from the Verb Disc to grids). In the read & write category, Sonia and Julie each began to use two new strategies: Sonia introduced strategy #11 (make lists, arrange words into hierarchies) and #12 (rewrite ideas in your own words), while Julie introduced strategy #9 (read and re-read your notes) and strategy #11 (make lists, arrange words into hierarchies). Finally, in the visual category, Denise introduced strategy #2 (underlining and use of different colours). In her journal, Sonia gives some insight regarding her new behaviour. Thus, she states: "Étant donné que la matière était nouvelle, j'ai pris de nouvelles stratégies tel que #12 [rewrite ideas in your own words] pour écrire les idées dans mes propres mots." In her journal, Julie also provided explanations as to why she began using strategy #11 (make lists, arrange words into hierarchies) as she writes: "J'ai appris en structurant la nouvelle information, en ordre, avec logique." Finally, Denise explained that to learn the present perfect tense, she experimented with this new strategy #2 (underlining and use of different colours) in combination with two old strategies, i.e., strategy # 12 (rewrite ideas and principles in your own words) and strategy # 4 (using drawings) as she wrote: "Je souligne en couleur les mots importants, écrit les idées principales en mes mots et fait des graphiques." This

behaviour shows evidence of metacognitive reflection (as well as autonomy in the choice of strategies).

Thus, when students reached class #8 (i.e., part B of the training stage: the present perfect tense) they began to use new strategies. The students' behaviour coupled with their explanatory comments demonstrated metacognitive awareness. For example Julie stated that she learned through structuring the new information, in order, and with logic. She therefore created a structure for input, and this is an example of manipulating a cognitive strategy, using metacognitive awareness. Metacognitive awareness refers to knowledge about things (i.e., the declarative knowledge) and how to do things (i.e., the procedural knowledge), and when (i.e., conditional knowledge) to do them. The control and knowledge of cognitive processes is important because when students manage their own use of learning strategies they become autonomous and improve their language learning .

The Low Employment of Visual Strategies

Another pattern that I observed was the low use of the visual learning strategies across the three learners (i.e., Sonia 0%, Diane 8.11%, and Julie 7%) (Table 6). During an informal discussion, Julie stated the following:

> Le visuel est déjà là, on a pas eu besoin de stratégies visuelles car le prof qui est visuel nous l'a présenté visuellement. Car elle nous donne déjà le modèle visuel, on est pas pour le faire une deuxième fois.

This statement concurs with other comments made during the study. For instance, because I used visual graphics to represent the relationship of the present perfect tense with the 'now' time line (see Appendix J), learners commented that they were helpful to internalise the target verb tense. Thus, Sonia said: "C'est la seule fois que le visuel m'a accroché car c'est plus mêlant, plus complexe et nouveau." Denise added : "Oui pour moi le visuel c'est très explicite." Finally, Julie said : "Ah, oui? Cela fait du sens!" These comments demonstrate that when new and more complex information is presented, students sometimes need a visual representation to understand the new concept. It appears that this helps them make links with previous information (as already discussed in chapter 2, on schemata).

The Elevated Use of Kinesthetic Strategies

Another pattern was observed during the training, which was verified using the strategy use checklist and the comments of students. A very high percentage of kinesthetic learning strategies was employed across the three learners throughout the 13-week period. I inquired into the reason for this and students answered that when they performed their weekly study session at home, they constantly used strategy #14 (do many exercises). This is because, in the research design, I had included weekly exercises for students to practice their verb tenses in context. This is an element in the research design, which I did not initially consider (the overlap between the employment of learning strategies per say and the exercises). However, it helps explain the elevated percentage of kinesthetic learning strategies across learners.

Summary and Conclusion

Research Question 1 investigates the effects of a Strategy Instruction Approach that entails teaching learners to adopt strategies that match their learning modalities. The score improvement between the pretest and the posttest on the present perfect tense was significant. Concerning whether the adoption of strategies contributed to the improvement of scores, I speculate that they had an important role to play as I have provided evidence through a discussion of the factors involved that strategy instruction has contributed to score gains. However because this study was a descriptive case study and not an experimental study (i.e., there was no control group) I could only verify this through observation. Furthermore, because strategies were embedded in strategy instruction (and cannot be dissociated from it), it appears that the many different factors discussed in this section when taken together contributed to the successful use of learning strategies.

Research Question #2: Presentation of Results

The goal of the second research question was to enquire whether the approach facilitated learning, and to define the nature of the help that the approach provided. The question asked the following:

2) Does this approach facilitate learning and, if so, what is the nature of that help?

To answer Research Question 2, I analysed two sources of data: the participants' opinions from the last interview (Interview #6) and the answers from the baseline questionnaire (Appendix F). I also used some complementary information from the background questionnaire. Therefore, this section is a presentation of the results followed by a discussion of the information drawn from these sources.

The Learners' Opinion

I conducted an interview (Interview #6) at the end of the last class (class #13). During a class discussion, the three participants were individually asked to answer the following two questions: (1) Did this approach help you study? How? (2) Does it facilitate learning? How? The following is a presentation of individual answers across learners.

Sonia's answer to question #1 (Did this approach help you study? How?) is as follows: "Oui. Connaître le nom de ma modalité ne m'a pas aidé à apprendre. Je l'utilisais. Cela a juste confirmé. Ça n'a pas changé ma façon car déjà à l'université j'utilisais sans savoir le nom. Je suis juste plus consciente." Therefore, Sonia stated that to know her learning profile did not help her learn in a new way because she intuitively already used learning strategies that matched her learning modalities. However, she went on to explain that it is this new awareness of who she is as a learner that seemed to have made a difference. She explained why she felt this way, as she answered question #2 (Does it facilitate learning? How?): "Oui. En prenant conscience [self- awareness] D'habitude les dessins ça ne m'aide pas, mais cette fois-ci, ça donné du sens. Les petits trains non, mais ça [le present perfect tense] oui."

Denise's answer to question #1 (Did this approach help you study? How?) is as follows:

> Oui, ça marche, ça a confirmé. Je savais avant que j'étais auditive. Copier mes notes aussi [read & write]. C'est vraiment ma façon à moi. On apprend à observer les gens et wow, le prof était visuel au bout! Ce qui a facilité c'est les petites dessins. Ça m'a montré d'autres choses, c'est-à-dire ta façon visuelle ça m'a aidé. J'ai appris à me connaître.

Denise's response to the question revealed that the approach confirmed what she already knew about herself (i.e., that her modality was aural). She also stated that she had gained in self-knowledge. Furthermore, she goes on to explain her self perception in relation to the approach, when asked question #2 (Does it facilitate learning? How?) as she said: "Ah, ben oui, je ne suis pas si bouchée que ça." Thus, she uses the expression " pas si bouchée" to mean that after all she is satisfied with her performance.

Julie's answer to question #1 (Did this approach help you study? How?) is as follows:

> Oui. Je structure plus maintenant au niveau visuel à répéter, c'est-à-dire que le dessin c'était facile. Les structures par exemple CASE 1,2,3. Je vais être de ce côté là plus structurée. En formation, j'apprends à reconnaître ceux qui sont visuels et auditifs. Je suis plus structurée maintenant que je fais de la formation.

Her answer to question #2 (Does it facilitate learning? How?) states:

> Oui, car au lieu de penser que je suis toujours mêlée, je sais que là maintenant j'utilise les quatre. Les quatre méthodes reviennent... mes quatre façons [she is *multimodal VARK*]. Et là je sais que la méthode d'une autre, même si ça marche bien c'est pas ma méthode, alors je garde ma confiance en ce que je suis.

Julie states that she has learned to structure information, which is an essential step to help encode information into the long term memory (input). This is important as it also facilitates retrieval of information (output). Therefore, Julie also confirmed that the approach helped her because it increased her self-confidence in the type of learner that she was.

We could summarise the factors believed to contribute to facilitate learning by saying that both Sonia and Denise felt that the approach confirmed the type of learner they thought they were. Concerning Julie, she said that knowing her learning modality helped her be more structured and improved her self-confidence.

The participants' Answers from the Baseline Questionnaire

I examined whether the opinions of the group changed over time. To do so, I gathered on two occasions (at the onset and at the end of the study) the answers from the last section of the baseline questionnaire (Appendix F). Table 8 presents the nine factors (items), which students believed helped them learn English. Participants circled these numbers: 1 (not at all), 2 (a little), 3 (moderately), and 4 (very important) and the answers of the three respondents were summarised in a single table to facilitate the interpretation. For instance, if the three learners believed that item #a (a good teacher) was very important, the number four was multiplied by three (the number of respondents). Thus, I obtained a numerical indication, representing all three learners both before and after the training. It is important to keep in mind that the higher the number, the more value the learners placed on the item. The change of opinions in the time that elapsed between the two administrations of the Questionnaire is summarised in Table 8.

Table 8

Factors Believed to Help Learning English

The training	before	after	difference
f. To study a lot	9	12	+3
g. To do a lot of aural practice	9	11	+2
d. To use learning strategies	8	10	+2
i. To be motivated	11	12	+1
h. To have a good English book	11	12	+1
c. To know myself as a learner	10	10	0
b. A good course	11	11	0
e. To do a lot of exercises	12	12	0
a. A good teacher	12	11	-1

The factors that show a positive difference (i.e., +3) between the two scores demonstrate that the three learners' opinions regarding the importance that they give to the factor has increased. On the other hand the negative difference (i.e., –1) shows that learners considered that the importance of the item had diminished over the 13-week period. The items that show a difference of zero show no change in opinions over time. The Questionnaire comprised two categories of elements: those that were internal and those that were external to the learners. For instance, *motivation* is a factor on which learners can exercise power while *a good teacher* is external to the learner (i.e., the environment). I divided the results into three categories, which are as follows: (1) substantial shift of opinions, (2) moderate shift of opinions, and (3) no shift of opinions. For example, an increase of two or three points on the table represents a substantial shift of opinion. Whatever is lower than this represents a moderate shift of opinion (i.e., +1 or – 1). A shift of zero represents no change. The following three items showed a *substantial shift* of opinions. They are: item #f (to study a lot) with an increase of +3; item g (to do a lot of aural practice), with an increase of +2, and item d (to use learning strategies) with also an increase of +2. In the *moderate shift* category are 2 items with a positive increase of +1, they are: items # i (to be motivated), and item #h (to have a good English book). The last item in the *moderate shift* category shows a decrease of (-1), which is item #a (a good teacher). Finally, in the *no shift* of opinion category (i.e., 0), are the following factors: item #c (to know myself as a learner), item #b (a good course) and item #e (to do a lot of exercises). According to Table 8, the substantial shift of opinion found in items #f, g, d, as well as the moderate shift of opinion found in item #i all had in common the fact that they were internal to the learner (things learners could do to take control of their learning).

The Participants' Opinions from the Background Questionnaire

The background questionnaire (adapted from Oxford, 1989b, p. 282) contained 17 questions (Appendix E). Some questions elicited personal information and were already discussed in the participants section (see chapter 3). However, questions #8, #9, #10, #11, and #17 elicited the students' opinions pertaining to factors that may have influenced the outcome of their learning experience. In this section, I will therefore state the questions along with the students' answers. There were four possible responses: excellent, bon,

moyen, médiocre. Question #8 asks a question regarding how students rate their overall proficiency in English as compared to the proficiency of the other participants in the class. Thus, in French, the question asks: "Comment évaluez-vous vos compétences en anglais comparé aux autres apprenants de votre classe?" Sonia answered "bon" while both Denise and Julie said: "moyen". Question #9, asks a question concerning how students rate their overall proficiency in English as compared with the proficiency of native speakers. The question is as follows: "Comment évaluez-vous vos compétences en anglais comparé aux compétences des gens pour qui l'anglais est leur langue natale?" Diane answered "moyen", and both Sonia and Julie said "médiocre". Question #10 inquires regarding how important it is for students to learn English. Therefore it asks: "Quelle importance accordez-vous au fait de devenir compétent en anglais?" Diane stated that it was "important", while both Sonia and Julie said it was "très important".Question #11 seeks to discover the reasons why students wanted to learn English. It asks: "Pourquoi voulez-vous apprendre l'anglais?" All three students indicated that they needed it to travel and further reasons were: an interest in the language (Sonia); friends who spoke the language as well as a desire to watch English television (Denise); and a personal challenge (Julie). Question #17 asks a question regarding whether students believed that the ability to learn a L2 derived from innate predisposition or is an ability can be developed through work: "D'après-vous, est-ce que l'habileté à apprendre l'anglais résulte de prédisposition innées ou vous croyez qu'elle peut se développer?" All three students were of the opinion that it can be developed.

Discussion of Results

I will now discuss the results pertaining to Research Question #2 which asks whether and how the approach facilitated learning in the following terms:

2) *Does this approach facilitate learning and, if so, what is the nature of that help?*

It can be said that there is evidence that the approach facilitated learning. The nature of that help is defined in terms of factors. They are as follows: participants became autonomous and began to take control of their learning, metacognition played a facilitating

role, sustained practice helped proceduralise strategies, and the participants' attitude and beliefs provided an underlying positive support throughout the learning process.

Evidence that participants became more autonomous was found through the analysis of the students' change of opinion regarding the importance they attached to the various factors, which they believed helped them learn English over the 13-week period (Table 8). For instance, between the beginning and the end of the study, students' opinions regarding the 'use of learning strategies' and the 'necessity to study a lot' increased, while the importance they gave to 'having a good teacher' decreased. This shows that they began to increase in the control of their learning and thus became more autonomous in their learning process. This finding concurs with the literature, which states that the role of strategy instruction is to promote learner autonomy (Cohen, 1998, cited in Harris, 2003, p.1).

Metacognition played a facilitating role in learning because it led learners to more profound understanding of their own learning process. This concurs with the literature on metacognition, which states that reflection plays a crucial role in learning (Schraw, 2001). This is especially true when students are given regular opportunities to reflect on their own particular ways to approach learning. One such example was Julie, who offered a comment reflecting her own peculiar approach to learning new material. She stated that she needed to organise new learning material following a number of steps: read, repeat, memorise and then make comparisons with previous information. This is an example of what Anderson (2002) calls 'orchestrating various strategies' (p.1). Another example was Denise who said that she learned more about herself in the study. In interview #1, she stated that her learning modality confirmed what type of learner she thought she was.

Another facilitating factor was the regular strategy practice, which led students to proceduralise their strategies. Therefore, when they reached the new section of the study (the training stage part B, the present perfect tense) (Table 4), they had already proceduralised the strategies. This was verified during an informal conversation, when I asked learners why they had not written any information on the blank page attached to the

pretest (on the present perfect tense), the purpose of which was to allow them to write down their strategies (i.e., key words, grids, verb form, time lines, etc.). They responded that they already knew their own set of learning strategies and that they did not need to write them down before applying them in context.

Finally, the participants' attitudes, and motivation, had a positive influence on the study. Of course they cannot be directly attributed to the approach, but they represented important affective variables, which positively influenced the outcome of the study. For example, the background questionnaire (Appendix E) revealed that students believed that learning English was not innate but rather that they had a role to play to develop their L2 language proficiencies. This is an indication of an underlying belief, which can in turn influence attitudes. The students' position was that of taking responsibility for their learning. They were also very motivated to learn English. This is verified by the students' responses to question #10 (background questionnaire, Appendix E), which asked learners to indicate the degree of importance they attributed to learning English. All three learners said that it was either important (Denise) or very important (Sonia and Julie). Gardner's (1985) opinion regarding affective variables such as attitude and motivation are that they are at least as important as language aptitude to predict language achievement.

Summary

In this chapter, the data analysis was presented and discussed to answer the two research questions. Quantitative and qualitative data were provided to demonstrate the effects of the approach. Chapter 5 presents the major findings, the limitations, the implications, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 5

Major Findings and Conclusions

Chapter 4 presented and discussed the results of the study. The effects of the approach that taught ESL adults to adopt learning strategies corresponding to their VARK learning profiles to learn the present perfect tense was discussed in terms of contributing factors. This chapter provides a discussion of the following: the major findings of the study; the limitations of the study; the implications for teaching; and a recommendation for further research.

Major Findings of the Study

The three ESL students significantly improved their scores between the pretest and the posttest. Evidence was provided that showed that strategy instruction appears to have contributed to the improvement of students' learning of the present perfect tense. Results demonstrated that it is a combination of the following factors taken together that contributed to the success of the approach: the explicit instruction; learning style assessment and consequent self awareness of students' VARK learning modalities; the adoption of personalised strategies; instruction on metacognition, cognition, and learning strategies. Furthermore, affective variables such as attitude and motivation had an important role to play in the overall success of the study. In addition, because the goal of strategy instruction is to help students know when, how and why to use strategies (Cohen, 1998), students became active and autonomous participants in their own learning process. Consequently, they became effective learners who understood their own learning styles and managed their own learning (Dearing, 1997, cited in McLoughlin 1999, p.5).

Limitations of the Study

This descriptive case study contains only a small number of participants and, because there is no comparison class, it is not possible to determine if it was actually this approach that really helped the learners. My view, however, is that the improvement of scores between the pretest and posttest was due to a number of factors present in strategy instruction, which, combined together, positively contributed to the success of the study.

For instance, the strategy instruction aimed at raising students' awareness of their learning strategies and it provided learners with systematic practice, combined with a monitoring of their strategy use (via the strategy checklist) and metacognitive discussions throughout the 13-week period. I can only link these factors to the increase of scores as verified by the posttest on the present perfect tense.

A number of other factors could account for the improvement of scores between the pretest and posttest, which could be verified in further research. For instance, factors such as the provision of an increased amount of attention to each learner, due to the small size of the group, or the systematic, sequential and organised teaching technique. Also, the pretest practice effect could have had an impact on the results. Regarding internal validity, students reported in an informal discussion that they used test-wiseness techniques (in the pretest) that entailed guessing the form of the present perfect tense using deduction. Another factor believed to have influenced the results might have been the visual manner in which I presented the information. This can be seen as a positive influence if it is considered in the light of being an example of a teacher modelling a type of strategy during instruction. I knew that my VARK learning profile contained a high visual score; however, I was careful during the planning phase of strategy instruction to teach in the four VARK modalities. Obviously, the precautions were not sufficient, as I became aware of the heavy use of visual teaching methods toward the end of the training. This realisation occurred when Julie stated that one of the reasons why she did not utilise many visual strategies during the study was because the teacher was already giving the visual models in the handouts. Furthermore, during the last class interview (Appendix J) another participant (Denise) said the following remark: " Wow! le prof était visuelle au bout!" Therefore, in spite of my conscious efforts to depart from the visual teaching mode, it was still prevalent. This is consistent with the opinion of researchers who suggest that we teach the way we learn (Witkin, 1976, cited in Claxton & Murrell, 1987) and that most teachers teach the way they learn best (Stitt-Gohdes, 1999).

Implications for Teaching

The challenge of employing strategy instruction in adult ESL classes with the aim of facilitating learning necessitates that teachers take into account a number of considerations. The following suggestions are drawn from the experience offered by the present research as well as recommendations from experts in the field of strategy instruction.

Implementing strategy instruction implies that the teacher needs to provide a learning environment in which participants receive explicit instruction and opportunities to practice strategies until they become proceduralised. The teacher must also model the strategies and explain how and when to use them, while making sure that the learners practice them on material that is easier at first (not to overload working memory). Once this is accomplished, learners can more easily transfer these strategies to new and more difficult learning tasks (such as learning the present perfect tense in the present study).

Instructional designers and teachers need to both use quality material to account for learners' individual learning styles and present a flexible learning context with the capacity to cater for individual differences while adapting instruction to the needs of individual learners (McLoughlin, 1999).

Recommendations for Further Research

Because of the complex nature of the factors that link learning strategies to learning styles, more research is needed to demonstrate that this type of approach is successful. Even though the findings of this study are limited due to the small sample size, the investigation provided the opportunity to observe individual adult ESL learners in their evolution in relation to their identified VARK learning profile. In my opinion, providing a type of strategy instruction that recognises individuality in learning is a promising approach because among other things it can serve as a starting point to further research on strategy instruction.

I believe that one of the greatest obstacles to adult language learning is a lack of self-confidence. Because the present study demonstrated that personal achievement and self-direction levels rose, these results could serve as a spring board to further research where self-confidence as a contributing factor could be investigated. I have observed that self-confidence can be an inhibitor to language learning among adult L2 learners. The problem occurs among students who, not being aware of individual learning styles, perceive that their learning methods are different from their peers. Lacking the self-confidence to persist in their own ways, they assume that it is wrong to do so. Once students realise that respecting their learning styles is a desirable aim, they can gain enough self-assurance to achieve their goals. Therefore, a study investigating how levels of self-assurance and motivation are affected through ownership of L2 learning experience could be valuable.

This study has demonstrated that students can exercise a certain power over learning and that L2 teaching in adult schools can be changed to reflect, recognise and honour the diversity of learning styles inherent to each person. It has also shown that people are "different; not dumb" (Fleming 1995), changing an old paradigm and allowing the students to transform their learning experience. Students in this study learned to trust their personal ways of learning and experienced an empowerment in their learning potential. I would therefore suggest that more empirical or case studies be performed in language schools to evaluate the impact of a similar strategy instruction approach with L2 language learners. Further recommendations in the field might include the following:

1. A similar case study in adult ESL classes, but with a greater sample size to provide additional information concerning the concept of matching learning strategies to learning styles.
2. A study involving teacher training that would introduce teachers to strategy training (in terms of learning modalities and learning strategies). This could be done through conferences, training, and group discussions, so that teachers might be prepared to meet the challenge of individualised learning, which has become more prevalent in L2 teaching.

3. An hypothesis driven study, building on the results of the present study, but done on a larger scale with a control group.
4. More case studies that focus on lowering the affective filter though the increased self-confidence gained by acknowledging and teaching individual differences in learning. The level of confidence measured at the onset of the study could be monitored throughout the session. Discussions integrated in the class would engage students in their evolution.
5. Case studies that would explore new doorways to learning, for example through strategy instruction and learning via the VARK "doors" to the mind. Teachers and students could keep a journal to record the changes that take place when they move from a rigid, linear and teacher-centred type of teaching to a multidimensional and flexible teaching that includes learning style assessment, strategy instruction and class discussions on cognition, metacognition, learning styles and strategies. The journal could provide a rich source of information, which would help analyse the changes that gradually take place in the mental processes, habits, attitudes, motivation and confidence levels. These would be an indicator of the benefits of such an approach.

The following points should be considered in designing studies with adult L2 learners:

1. Adult learners have the potential to be autonomous, self-directed, goal oriented, and involved in their own learning process Cranton (1992). A key to getting students actively involved in their L2 learning is an understanding of their own learning style preferences St Hill (1999, cited in Fleming 2001, p. 45) states that teachers, should take into account modal preferences to whatever extent is feasible when designing and delivering classes.
2. Because "there are significant differences in how learning styles are defined and measured" (Brikey & Rodman, 1995), one can easily get lost in methods of measurement, which are complex, lack uniformity and are difficult to operationalise. Therefore, using the VARK learning style questionnaire is a practical way to assess learning styles and provide strategy instruction.

3. Resorting to matching the learning styles of teachers to learners in separate classes is commendable but unpractical, as the variety of learning styles present in a student population is very varied, and the number of teachers needed for such sub-groups would be too great. Rather, it is more practical to provide a learning style profile for each students and then instruct students on how to capitalise on their own learning styles preferences to achieve L2 learning.

Contribution of this Study

The results of the study demonstrate that when students are aware of their personal learning styles (VARK learning profiles), they can use this knowledge to develop a personalised way to learn and increase their potential in ESL learning. The new insight that I gained into the role that individual personality factors plays in ESL learning was invaluable. It demonstrated that success can be reached using a number of different paths. It emphasises that we, as language teachers, should do our best to encourage students in their endeavours to learn according to their own particular ways.

Conclusion

The personalised approach to learning a second language provided within a structured context is a way of addressing the diversity that ESL instructors often encounter in the classroom. It offers a greater variety of ways for students to learn through the identification of their personal learning styles. It is hoped that the results of this descriptive study will have an impact on teaching and on further research concerning strategy instruction.

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Appendix B

FORMULAIRE DE CONSENSTEMENT À UNE RECHERCHE

Par la présente je déclare accepter de participer au projet de recherche appelé:
Les effets de l'Instruction stratégique (combiner les stratégies d'apprentissage aux modalités d'apprentissage) lors de l'acquisition du present perfect chez les adultes apprenant l'anglais langue seconde. (The effects of matching learning strategies to learning modalities in the acquisition of the present perfect with adult ESL learners).

Dirigé par: Sophie Bourgeois **Supervisé par:** Carolyn Turner Ph.D. **Université McGill**

1. L'objet de la recherche:
Chez les adultes apprenant l'anglais langue second, l'objectif de cette étude est d'observer les effets de l'instruction stratégique lors de l'apprentissage des temps de verbes. Pour ce faire l'enseignante/chercheure donnera de l'instruction au sujet des stratégies d'apprentissages qui correspondent aux modalités d'apprentissage des participants. Les données ainsi obtenues seront utilisées pour le mémoire de thèse de l'enseignante.

2. Procédures:
Les participants prendront part à une session de 14 semaines au cours de laquelle l'instruction stratégique sera appliquée à l'apprentissage des temps de verbes en anglais. L'information sera recueillie à l'aide de tests et questionnaires. Toutes les données recueillies durant cette étude seront traitées de façon confidentielle. Tout le matériel écrit sera codifié, et une liste centrale contenant le nom du participant et son code sera conservé dans un endroit sûr. La clé du code sera conservée dans une filière de référence, qui sera séparé des données originales utilisées lors de l'analyse des résultats.

3" Conditions de participation:
Pendant la session de 14 semaines les participants sont invités à apprendre les temps de verbes en anglais en utilisant des stratégies d'étude qui sont adaptées à leurs modalités d'apprentissage. Les temps de verbes sont utiles à l'apprentissage de l'anglais. Il n'Y a aucun risque relié à la participation à cette recherche et le seul inconvénient ou responsabilité se situe au niveau de l'implication de l'étudiant qui devra faire un nombre limité d'exercices à la maison, soit environ une à deux heurs de devoir par semaine. Les avantages sont la satisfaction personnelle d'apprendre une langue second c'est-à-dire l'anglais.

. Je comprends l'objet de cette étude et j'ai pris connaissances des risques, avantages et inconvénients que cette recherche peut impliquer.
. Je reconnais que le choix de participer ou non à cette recherche se fait de façon volontaire et que je suis libre de retirer ma participation à n'importe quel moment sans aucune pénalité ou préjudice.
. Je comprends la façon dont la confidentialité sera maintenue durant tout le projet de recherche.
. Je comprends l'utilisation prévue des données, et spécifiquement l'utilisation des données en ce qui concerne la publication, la communication et la dissémination des résultats.

J'ai pris connaissance de l'information ci-dessus et je comprends ce que signifie ma participation à cette entente. Je consens par la présente et je participe volontairement à cette étude.

Nom _____
Signature_____
Date_____

FORM 2

CELSA - English Language Skills Assessment

Pre-Test Practice for CELSA BN, IC, AN

DIRECTIONS TO STUDENTS

Read the following quickly. Sometimes you see four words in a box. Choose the best word to complete the story or conversation. Read everything first. Don't write on the test paper. Write on the answer sheet. There are four answers for each question. Only one answer is correct. Fill in the letter of the correct answer.

For example, if b is correct: a ~~b~~ c d.

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE:

PRACTICE TEST

John is a student. X1. a. He b. He's c. She d. Him studies English. He

X2. a. is b. go c. likes d. happy his class. His teacher is very X3. a. work b. school c. good d. day .

You will have 45 minutes to do the test. Work quickly. Do the easy questions first; then go back for the others. Do not use a dictionary or a book. After you finish, close the test. Stay in your seat at all times.

Ask questions now - before you open the test.

OPEN THE TEST WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD BEGIN.

ANN'S PRESENT

Ann Johnson lives in this city with her husband and two children. They are living on Post Street now. [1. a. They b. He c. They're d. She]

moved there last month. Their apartment [2. a. is b. was c. are d. it's]

very big and sunny. It has [3. a. dining b. six c. the d. much] rooms.

Ann is a secretary. She works [4. a. on b. secretary c. hard d. in] an office downtown. She works every day from 9:00 to 4:30. She only [5. a. time b. has c. 11 d. have] 45 minutes for her lunch, so [6. a. she's b. that c. she d. time] usually eats in her office. She [7. a. take b. eats c. made d. brings] her lunch because it's cheaper. She [8. a. doesn't b. usually c. will d. likes] has a sandwich and a piece [9. a. and b. of c. pie d. apple] fruit. After lunch, she has to work hard again.

Appendix D

Questionnaire VARK

Ce questionnaire vise à trouver vos préférences au niveau des façons dont vous traitez l'information. Vous découvrirez que vous avez un style d'apprentissage préféré et qu'une partie de ce style d'apprentissage représente votre préférence pour la façon dont vous recevez et émettez idées ou information.

Choisissez la réponse qui explique le mieux vos préférences et encerclez la lettre à côté de celle-ci. Encerclez plus d'une réponse si vous pensez qu'une seule réponse ne suffit pas à décrire votre perception. Laissez un espace vide si la question ne s'applique à aucune de vos perceptions.

---

1. Vous êtes sur le point de donner des indications à une personne qui se trouve debout près de vous. Celle-ci loge présentement dans un hôtel en ville et désire vous visiter plus tard. Elle a une voiture de location. Ce que vous feriez. Vous :
   a) faites un dessin ou lui donnez une carte.
   b) lui dites les indications.
   c) écrivez les indications (sans carte).
   d) allez la chercher à l'hôtel avec votre auto.

2. Vous n'êtes pas certain si a mot s'épelle « dépendant » ou « dépendent ». Ce que vous feriez. Vous :
   c) regardez dans le dictionnaire.
   a) voyez le mot dans votre tête et vous faite un choix selon ce qu'il a l'air.
   b) le dites dans votre tête.
   d) écrivez les deux versions sur un bout de papier et en choisissez un.

3. Vous venez de recevoir une copie de votre itinéraire pour un voyage à l'étranger. Cela Intéresse un de vos amis. Ce que vous feriez. Vous :
   b) lui téléphonez et lui en parlez.
   c) lui envoyez une copie imprimée de l'itinéraire.
   a) lui montrez sur une carte du monde.
   d) partagez ce que vous avez l'intention de faire à chaque endroit que vous visiterez.

4. Vous allez cuisiner quelque chose de spécial pour gâter votre famille. Ce que vous feriez. Vous :
   d) cuisinez quelque chose de connu sans avoir besoin du mode d'emploi.
   a) feuilletez le livre de recettes en cherchant des idées à partir des photos.
   c) vous vous référez à un livre de recettes que vous connaissez déjà et qui contient de bonnes recettes

5. Un groupe de touristes vous a été assigné. Ces gens veulent en savoir plus à propos de la faune des parcs et réserves. Ce que vous feriez. Vous :
   d) les amenez directement au parc ou à la réserve.
   a) leur montrez des diapositives ou des photos.
   c) leur donneriez des brochures ou un livre au sujet de la faune dans les parcs et réserves.
   b) vous leur donneriez une conférence au sujet des parcs et réserves.

6. Vous êtes sur le point d'acheter un nouveau lecteur de disques compacts. À part le prix, qu'est-ce qui influencerait le plus votre décision ?
   b) Le vendeur vous dit ce que vous voulez entendre.
   c) Vous lisez des détails à son sujet.
   d) Vous jouez avec les manettes et vous l'écoutez
   a) Il a l'air à la mode et élégant

7. Souvenez-vous d'un moment dans votre vie ou vous avez appris un nouveau jeu de société. Essayez de ne pas choisir un jeu qui comportait des habiletés physiques, exemple monter à vélo. Comment apprenez-vous le mieux ?
   a) Avec des indices visuels—des photos, diagrammes et cartes.
   c) Avec un mode d'emploi par écrit.
   b) En écoutant quelqu'un vous l'expliquer.
   d) En jouant ou en l'essayant.

8. Vous avez un problème visuel. Vous préférez que le médecin :
   b) vous dise ce qu'il ne va pas.
   a) vous montre un diagramme de ce qui ne va pas.
   d) utilise un modèle d'un œil et vous montre ce qui n'allait pas

9. Vous êtes sur le point d'apprendre comment utiliser un nouveau programme sur l'ordinateur. Ce que vous feriez vous:
   d) vous assoyez au clavier afin d'essayer le nouveau programme.
   c) lisez le manuel d'instruction qui vient avec le programme.
   b) appelez un amis et vous lui posez des questions au sujet du programme.

10. Vous êtes à l'hôtel et vous avez une voiture. Vous aimeriez visiter des amis mais vous ne connaissez pas leur adresse. Ce que vous aimeriez qu'ils fassent pour vous :
    a) qu'ils vous dessinent une carte sur un bout de papier ou qu'ils vous envoient une carte sur Internet.
    b) qu'ils vous disent les indications.
    c) qu'ils vous écrivent les indications (sans utiliser une carte).
    d) qu'ils viennent vous chercher en auto à votre hôtel.

11. À part le prix, qu'est-ce qui vous influence le plus lors de la décision d'acheter un livre ?
    d) Vous avez déjà utilisé une copie auparavant.
    b) Un ami vous en a parlé.
    c) Vous lisez rapidement certaines parties du livre.
    a) L'apparence du livre est attrayante.

12. Un nouveau film est arrivé en ville. Qu'est-ce qui influencerait le plus votre décision d'aller ou de ne pas aller le voir ?
    b) Vous avez entendu un compte rendu à la radio.
    c) Vous avez lu un compte rendu.
    a) Vous avez vu une avant-première.

13. Est-ce que vous préférez un enseignant qui aime utiliser :
    c) un manuel scolaire, des prospectus et des lectures.
    a) des organigrammes, des cartes et des graphiques.
    d) des voyages d'étude, des modèles, des laboratoires et des sessions de pratique.
    b) des discussions en classe ou par courriel, du clavardage en groupe ou des conférenciers.

Appendix E

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE
(QUESTIONNAIRE D'ARRIÈRE-PLAN)

1. Nom _____ 2. Date_____

3. âge _____ 4. sexe _____5. Langue maternelle _____

6. Langue(s) que vous parlez à la maison_____

7. Cela fait combien d'années que vous apprenez l'anglais ?_____

8. Comment évaluez-vous vos compétences en anglais comparé aux autres apprenants de votre classe ? (encerclez une seule réponse)
   Excellent bon moyen médiocre

9. Comment évaluez-vous vos compétences en anglais comparé aux compétences des gens pour qui l'anglais est leur langue natale ? (encerclez une seule réponse)

   Excellent bon moyen médiocre

10. Quelle importance accordez-vous au fait de devenir compétent an anglais? (encerclez une seule réponse)

    Très important important pas tellement important

11. Pourquoi voulez-vous apprendre l'anglais? (cochez les réponse qui vous conviennent)
    _____ J'ai un intérêt pour la langue
    _____ J'ai intérêt pour la culture
    _____ J'ai des amis qui parlent la langue
    _____ J'ai besoin de l'anglais afin de continuer mes études
    _____ J'ai besoin de l'anglais pour mon travail
    _____ J'ai besoin de l'anglais pour voyager
    _____ Autre (énumérez) : _____

12. Aimez-vous apprendre l'anglais ? (encerclez une seule réponse) oui non

13. Avez-vous déjà appris une autre langue ? oui non

14. Si vous avez répondu oui ci-dessus, laquelle ? _____

15. Quel type de travail faites vous? _____

16. Combien d'années d'étude avez vous? (études générales)
    a. secondaire b. Cégep_____ c. université_____
    d. autre _____.

17. D'après vous, est-ce que l'habileté à apprendre l'anglais résulte de prédispositions innées ou Vous croyez qu'elle peut se développer? _____

Appendix F

QUESTIONNAIR DE BASE
(Baseline questionnaire)

1...Quels sont les 3 types de mémoire?

2. Faites un dessin des 3 types de mémoires.

3. Quelles sont les 4 différentes modalités VARK?

4. Qu'est-ce que la mémoire sensorielle?

5. Combien de temps la mémoire sensorielle garde-t-elle l'information?

6. Quel type de mémoire est utilisée afin de travailler avec l'information?

7. Quel type de mémoire est utilisée afin de d'emmagasiner l'information?

8. Est-ce que le mot cognition vous dit quelque chose? Si oui, qu'est que c'est?

9. Est-ce que le mot style d'apprentissage vous dit quelque chose? Si oui, qu'est-ce que c'est?

10. Savez-vous quelle est votre modalité d'apprentissage VARK?

11. Avez-vous dernièrement changé votre méthode d'apprentissage de l'information pour un test par exemple? Si oui expliquez

12. En tant qu'apprenant de l'anglais, est-ce que vous vous voyez comme quelqu'un qui a du succès, c'est-à-dire qui atteint-tu ses objectifs d'apprentissage?

13. Pouvez-vous donner une définition pour le mot stratégie d'apprentissage?

14. Donnez un exemple de stratégie d'apprentissage :

15. Dites le degré d'importance que vous attachez à chaque raisons qui vous amènent à apprendre l'anglais.

	1 pas du tout	2 un peu	3 pas mal			4 beaucoup
a.	un bon professeur		1	2	3	4
b.	un bon cours		1	2	3	4
c.	me connaître en tant qu'apprenant		1	2	3	4
d.	utiliser des stratégies d'apprentissage		1	2	3	4
e.	faire beaucoup d'exercices		1	2	3	4
f.	étudier beaucoup		1	2	3	4
g.	pratiquer beaucoup oralement		1	2	3	4
h.	avoir un bon livre d'anglais		1	2	3	4
i.	être motivé		1	2	3	4

Appendix G
Strategy use Checklist

Name:_____

My learning modality _____
V :
A :
R :
K :

Strategy use over the 14-week training period

	Weeks # →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
↓															
	VISUAL LEARNING STRATEGIES														
1	Diagrams, flow charts or different spatial arrangements														
2	Underlining and use of different colours highlighters														
3	Using key words or symbols														
4	Using drawings														
	AURAL LEARNING STRATEGIES														
5	Ask yourself a question and answer it														
6	Retire in a quiet place to concentrate and study														
7	Repeat and rehearse the information orally														
8	Discuss the information with your classmates or ask questions to the teacher														
	READ & WRITE LEARNING STRATEGIES														
9	Read and re-read your notes														
10	Write your notes again and again														
11	Play with words (computer), make lists, arrange words into hierarchies														
12	Rewrite ideas and principles in your own words														
	KINESTHETIC LEARNING STRATEGIES														
13	Use many examples														
14	do many exercises														
15	Practice information transfer (from the VERB DISC to grids or flash cards)														
16	Practice information (pretend that you are talking to someone using the information or attempt to explain something to someone.														

Appendix H

Intermediate level 1 – FORM 1
Name: _____

score: /85

- This test has two sections: SECTION 1 and SECTION 2.
- You will have 1 :30 hour to do the test (section 1 and section 2)
- Do not use a dictionary or a book.
- After you finish, close the test.
- Stay in your seat at all times.
- You may Ask questions now.

SECTION 1

score: /35

1. Conjugate the verb TO BE in the PRESENT PERFECT in the AFFIRMATIVE. (6pts)

(I)_____
(You)_____
(He)_____
(We)_____
(You)_____
(They)_____

2. Conjugate the verb TO HAVE at the PRESENT PERFECT at the INTERROGATIVE. (6pts)

(I)_____
(You)_____
(He)_____
(We)_____
(You)_____
(They)_____

3. Conjugate the verb TO TALK at the PRESENT PERFECT at the NEGATIVE. (6pts)

(I)_____
(You)_____
(He)_____
(We)_____
(You)_____
(They)_____

4. Write the key words of the present perfect, according to the various cases. (14 pts)

Case 1: _____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
Case 2: _____ _____
Case 3: _____ _____

5. Write in your own words the cases when we use the present perfect. (3pts)

Case 1: _____
_____
Case 2: _____
_____
Case 3: _____
_____

Intermediate level 1 – FORM 1

score:	/50

SECTION 2

➢ **Directions: Complete the sentences with the words in parentheses. Use only the SIMPLE PAST or the PRESENT PERFECT.**

1. A: How many tests (you, take) _____ since the beginning of the semester?
   B: (I, not, take) _____ any tests since the beginning of the semester.

2. A: Is Erica going to eat lunch with us today?
   B: No. (She, eat, already) _____.
   (She, eat) _____ an hour ago.

3. A: Have you ever been to Washington D.C.?
   B: No, (we, be, never) _____ to Washington D.C. What about you?
   A: Yes, we have. (we, visit) _____ Washington last year.

4. A: (You, read, ever) _____ "the Pilgrim's Progress"?
   B: No, (I, read, never) _____ it. What is it?
   A: It is an allegory. One of the greatest literary masterpieces in the world.

5. A: (He, have, ever) _____ a job?
   B: No, (He, not, have) _____ a job yet.

6. A: (She, ever, be) _____ to Australia?
   B: Yes, she has. (she, be) _____ to Australia many times.
   In fact, (she, go) _____ to Australia last year.

7. A: What European countries (you, visit) _____ since January 2003?
   B: (we, visit, recently) _____ Germany and France.
   (we, visit) _____ Italy three weeks ago but (we, be, not) _____ to England yet.

8. Mike is working on his composition, but (he, not finish,) _____ it yet. He will probably finish it in a few hours.
   (We, finish, already) _____ our homework. (We, complete) _____ it thirty minutes ago.

9. My name is Tina. I am a French student. (I, be) _____ at this school since January. (I, arrive) _____ here on January 5, and (my classes, begin) _____ on January 7.

10. A: (You, ever, drive) _____ a truck?
B: No, (I, never, drive) _____ a truck.

11. A: (I, live) _____ in Montreal for two years. (I move) _____ two years ago, and I still live here. What about you?
B: (I, live) _____ in Montreal since 2000. So, (I, be) _____ here for three years.

12. (I, live) _____ in Rome since April. So far, (I, visit) _____ the Vatican and a few museums. Yesterday, (I, visit) _____ the Coliseum.

13. A: (you, attend) _____ any parties since you came here?
B: (I, attend) _____ parties two or three times. What about you?
A: (I, already, be) _____ to four parties since September.

14. A: (You, ever, be) _____ in a blizzard?
B: Yes, (we, be) _____ in a blizzard many times. However, (we, not, be) _____ in one for four years.

15. A: (you, learn) _____ a lot of French since you moved to Montreal six months ago?
B: Yes, I have. (I, study) _____ very hard for six months.

16. A: (Mike, already, write) _____ a letter to his mom?
B: Yes, he has. (he, write) _____ his mom a letter yesterday.

17. A: (Your, friends, move) _____ to a new apartment recently?
B: Yes, (they, be) _____ in their new apartment for two days.

18. (They, ski) _____ at Sutton many times. In fact, (they, ski) _____ at Sutton last week.

19. A: What lessons (you, study) _____ recently?
B: So far, (We, study) _____ only lesson two and three.

20. A: (we, sleep) _____ in a tent five or six times. What about you?
B: (We, never, sleep) _____ in a tent.

Appendix I
JOURNAL

Journal week #

Name:
Date:

---

1. Cette semaine j'ai expérimenté avec les stratégies suivantes :

2. Les stratégie que j'aime le mieux pour l'instant sont les stratégies# : _____

3. Cette semaine j'ai réalisé par rapport à mon apprentissage à l'aide des stratégies que :

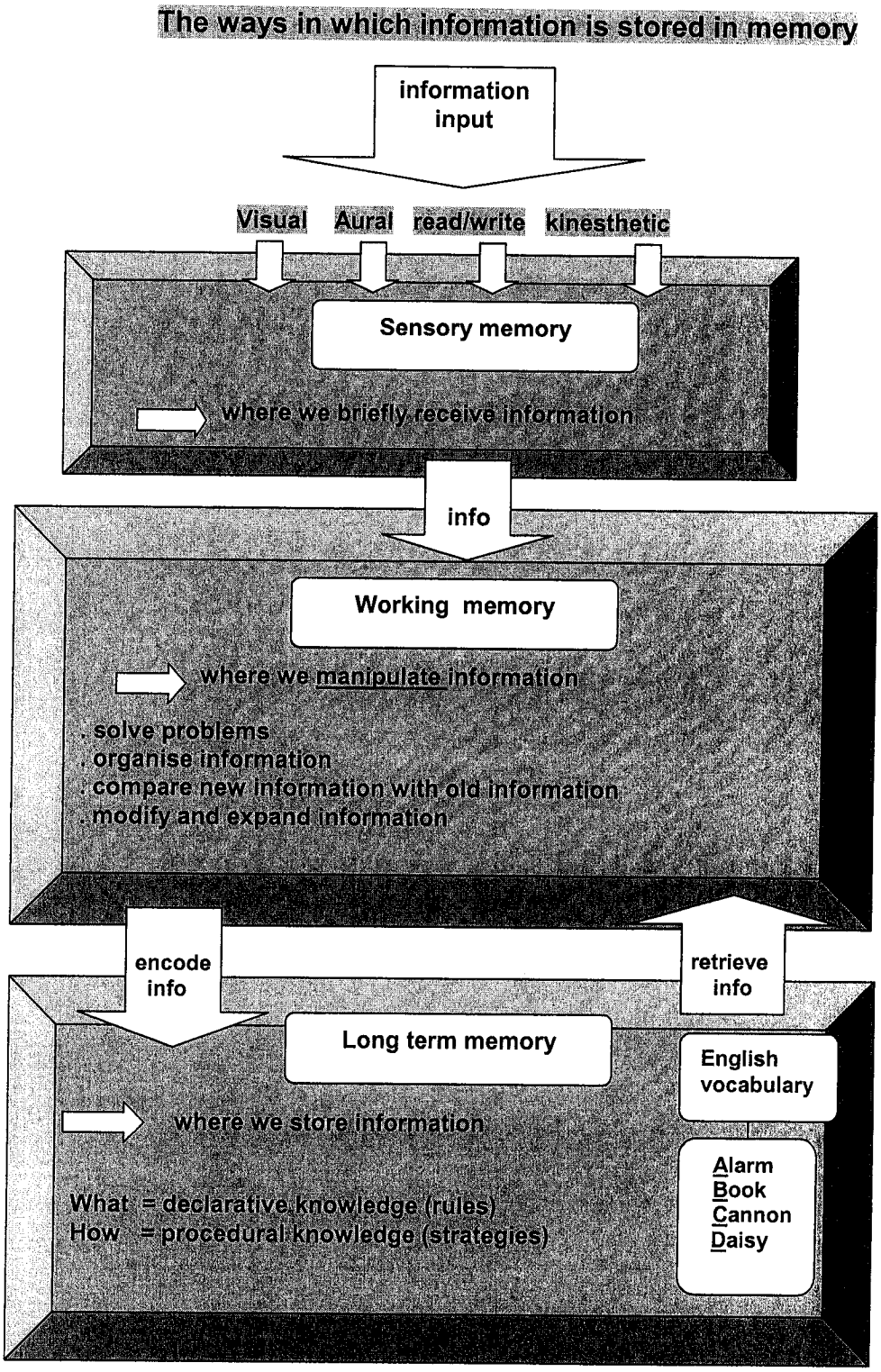
4. L'Information que je trouve difficile à me rappeler est celle-ci :

5. Ce que j'ai trouvé comme truc pour me rappeler de l'info pour le "review test" est :

6. Je me pose la question suivante (je ne comprends pas encore ceci) :

7. J'ai le goût de partager ceci avec l'enseignante et les autres :

Appendix J
The training (course content)



CLASS #2 : STRATEGY TRAINING
Introduction to your learning style VARK

The VARK questionnaire tells you how you learn :
People have preferences for modes or senses through which they take in and process information because they perceive and process information differently.
The acronym **VARK** stands for the visual, aural, read & write and kinesthetic sensory modalities used in learning.
We refer to the information itself (e.g., English vocabulary) as input, which enters our brain via any of the 4 VARK sensory **modalities.**

What is your sensory modality? Are you a visual, aural, read/write, or a kinesthetic or learner?

Visual learner (V) : you have a preference for **visual or symbolic** information in the form of diagrams, flow charts, the use of different colours to highlight information, the use of all the symbolic arrows, circles, hierarchies, drawings and other devices that are used to represent words. Note: this does not include using television, and videos.

Aural learner (A) : you prefer information that is **"spoken or heard"**. For example asking questions, explaining things to others, verbally rehearse new information or having a discussion with other people. **aural = hearing. oral =speaking**

Read & write learner (R) : you prefer information that is **written**; for example reading or writing your notes, answering the questions in your exercise book, or making lists and headings.

Kinesthetic learner (K) : you prefer information that **connects to reality**, either through experience, example, and practice (real or simulated).

→**Step 1 :** take the VARK questionnaire.
→**Step 2 :** get your VARK results (You have a _____ learning style)
→**Step 3 :** What are your VARK results? (write your score below)
. Visual :
. Aural :
. Read/Write :
. Kinesthetic :
. Multimodal :
→ **Step 5 :** Use the following help sheets for study strategies that apply to your learning preferences :

If your learning preference is:

Learning preference		**Learning strategies**
Visual _____	**Use →**	visual learning strategies
Aural _____	**Use →**	aural learning strategies
Read-write _____	**Use →**	read/write learning strategies
Kinesthetic _____	**Use →**	kinesthetic learning strategies
Multimodal _____	**Use →**	a combination of all of the Above

CLASS #2 : STRATEGY TRAINING

VISUAL LEARNING STRATEGIES

1 **Diagrams, flow charts or different spatial arrangements**

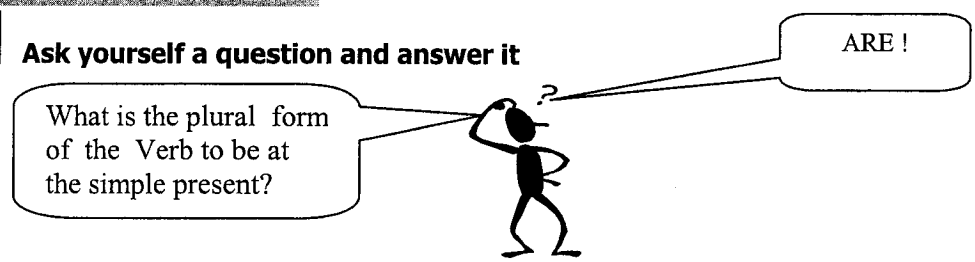
Diagrams

I	am
you	are
he/she/it	is
we	are
you	are
they	are

→

AURAL LEARNING STRATEGIES

5 **Ask yourself a question and answer it**



READ/WRITE LEARNING STRATEGIES

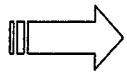
11 **Arrange ideas and play with words**

. you can use the word processor to arrange ideas and to "play" with words.
. you can make lists
. you can arrange words into hierarchies.

KINESTHETIC STRATEGIES

15 Practice information transfer

. Take the time to take the information from the Verb Disc and write it in your own workbook or grids or flash cards.
. Play with your flash cards and make a game out of remembering the information.



I am
You are

CLASS #3 : THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE. FORM, KEY WORDS & USAGE

a. the form

	Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative
I			
You			
He,she,it			
We			
You			
they			

This is an example of the **visual strategy #1** called **diagrams**

b. the key words

at the moment
now
presently
right now

The alphabetical order was used here. This is an example of the **read & write strategy#11** called **hierarchies**

c. the use

1. **The present progressive expresses an activity that is in progress (is happening) right now at the time the speaker is saying the sentence.**
2. **An action generally in progress.**

This is an example of the visual strategy #2 called underligning or use of different colours

-Try to reduce the sentence to a ratio of 1 / 3 (one third) and
- Write it in your own words

This is an example of read & write strategy #12 rewrite ideas and principles in your own words

CLASS #8: THE PRESENT PERFECT

A. The form

Affirmative

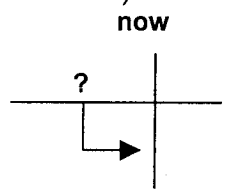
subject	auxiliary: has/have	past participle		context
I	**have**	(be)	**been**	**to Iran before.**
You	have	(eat)	eaten	pasta recently.
He, she, it	has	(walk)	walk**ed**	to India this year.
We		(fly)		to Mexico recently.
You		(talk)		to John before.
They		(go)		to Italy recently.

CLASS #9 : THE PRESENT PERFECT (CONTINUED)

B. The use and meaning

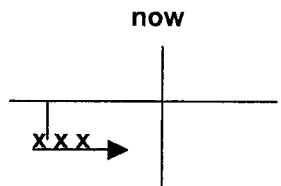
CASE 1: The present perfect expresses activities or situations that happened before now at some unspecified time in the past.

a. Nancy has **already** eaten dinner. *(when? We don't know, some time before now.)*
b. Have you **ever** driven a truck?
c. Ken has**n't** driven a car **yet.**
d. We have **never** been here.
e. I have read the book " The Firm" **(before).** * *(" Before" is understated.)*
f. He has eaten fish **recently (lately).**
g. **So far,** Ted has had two perfect scores on his exams.
h. We have **just** bought a new car.
i. I have passed my test. → *(There is no time reference.)*



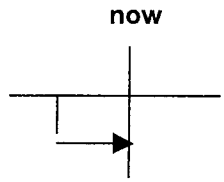
CASE 2: The present perfect is used to express activities that were repeated many times in the past. We don't know exactly when.

a. Ted has read that book **many times.**
b. I have been to that museum **five or six times.**
c. They have had **four** phone calls **today.**



CASE 3: The present perfect is used with since or for to express situations that began in the past and continue to the present.

a. Matt has lived in Atlanta **since** 1990
b. He has worked in Michigan **for** two years.
d. He has worked there **since** 9 o'clock.



C. The key words

CASE 1: already, ever, never, not...yet, before, recently, lately, just.
CASE 2: many times, one or two times, today, this year (month, week), so far
CASE 3: since :depuis (suivi d'un temps spécifique)
For : depuis (suivi d'une durée de temps spécifique)

CLASS #10 : THE PRESENT PERFECT (CONTINUED)

- **Exercise 9: Complete the sentences with the words in parentheses. Use the SIMPLE PAST or THE PRESENT PERFECT.**

1. A: How many candies (you, take) _____ since the 1st of January?
   B: (I, not take) _____ any candies since the 1st of January.

2. A: Is Ted going to visit the zoo with us today?
   B: No, (he, visit, already) _____ the zoo last month.

3. A: Have you ever been to Melbourne?
   B: Yes, I have. (I, visit) _____Melbourne last year.

4. A: (They, have, ever) _____ a jeep?
   B: No, (they, not, have) _____ a jeep yet, but they want one.

5. A: (She, ever, be) _____ to Disney World?
   B: Yes, she has. (she, be) _____ to Disney World
   Many times. In fact, (she, go) _____ there last year.

Appendix K
Quiz

Name : _____

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1. What is the FORM of the present perfect?

2. What are the KEY WORDS of the present perfect?

3. What is the USE of the present perfect?

Appendix L


AFFIRMATIVE
INTERROGATIVE
VERBS
PROGRESSIVE ADD
The Verb Disc
A
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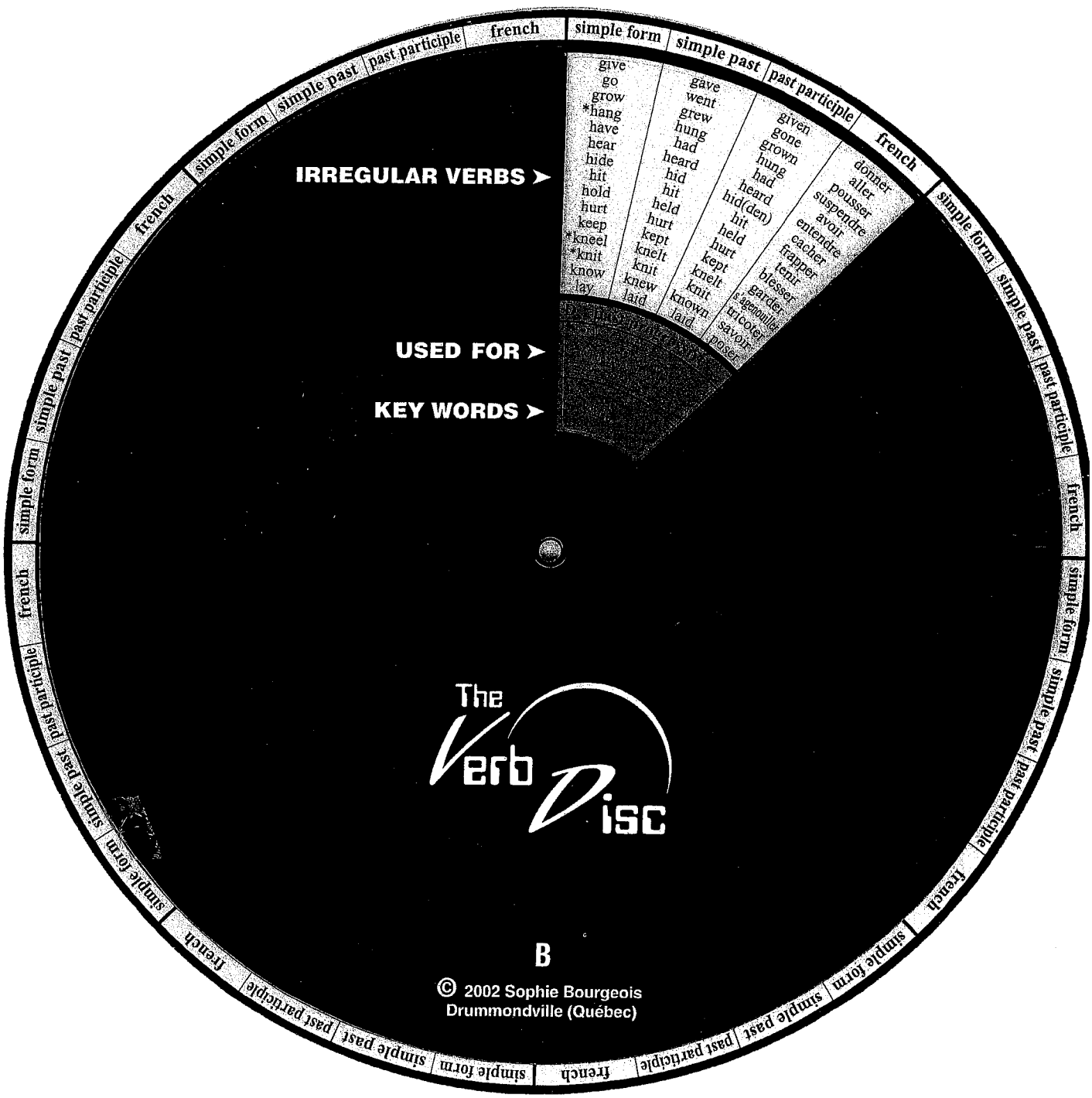
simple form
simple past
past participle
french
IRREGULAR VERBS ➤
give
go
grow
*hang
have
hear
hide
hit
hold
hurt
keep
*kneel
*knit
know
lay
gave
went
grew
hung
had
heard
hid
hit
held
hurt
kept
knelt
knit
knew
laid
given
gone
grown
hung
had
heard
hid(den)
hit
held
hurt
kept
knelt
knit
known
laid
donner
aller
pousser
suspendre
avoir
entendre
cacher
frapper
tenir
blesser
garder
s'agenouiller
tricoter
savoir
poser
USED FOR ➤
KEY WORDS ➤
The Verb Disc
B
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