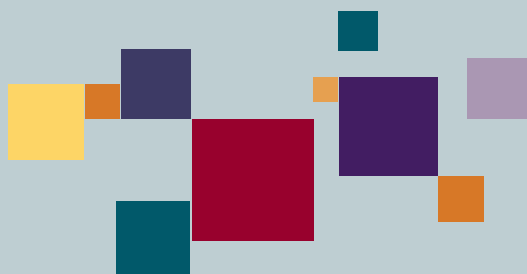


# Motivation and Learning Strategies in a Foreign Language Setting:

*A Look at a Learner of Korean*

BY ELIZABETH ROOT

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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# CHAPTER 1:

## AN INTRODUCTION TO MOTIVATION AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

A Modern Language Association survey report in 1991 (Wen, 1997, p. 235) revealed Asian languages as having the highest enrollment growth rates in the USA at the college level. Not only are Asian languages difficult, but they are also taught in a foreign language (FL) setting, where authentic language input may not be readily available outside the classroom. Often, with a character-based language, language learners' motivation must be high since persistence and determination are needed to deal with the stress of a difficult language (Okada et al., 1996). Also, in dealing with a difficult language, learners often have to develop and utilize a wide range of learning strategies to help guarantee success. There is still much debate, however, as to what specific factors influence motivation in language learning. It is not clear how motivation affects a continued interest or success or failure in language learning, especially in an FL setting. It also is not clear how motivation specifically affects choice regarding the utilization of learning strategies.

Research on motivation at first only concentrated on two main motivational orientations of language learners. More recently, studies have shown a wider range of factors at work. In this literature review, two different models of motivation will be discussed. First, Gardner's framework (1985) was the beginning of language research in that area. Second, Dörnyei (1994a) specifically devised a model of motivation for a FL setting. Finally, research on learning strategies will be summarized to show the importance of strategies in a language learning experience and how data has been collected and categorized. One such form of data collection, a language diary, is then used to highlight the range of motivational factors and language strategies present in a long-term case study. In this particular study, the subject and researcher are one and the same, in an effort to look closely at how both motivation and learning strategies influence a FL learning experience.

### **Motivation**

In the literature on motivation, very rarely is one single, integrated definition of motivation included. Instead, the focus is what specific factors work together to create motivation. Ellis (1994), in an overview of research on motivation, simply asserted that motivation affects the extent to which language learners persevere in learning, what kinds of behavior they exert, and their actual achievement. Wlodowski explained motivation as "the processes that can (a) arouse and instigate behavior, (b) give direction or purpose to behavior,

(c) continue to allow behavior to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior” (1985, p. 2). The two models of motivation discussed in this literature review also concentrate on specific factors that influence motivation.

### Gardner’s Model

Gardner was one of the pioneering researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) to focus on motivation. He chose to define motivation by specifying four aspects of motivation:

1. a goal
2. effortful behavior to reach the goal
3. a desire to attain the goal
4. positive attitudes toward the goal (Gardner, 1985, p. 50)

A goal, however, was not necessarily a measurable component of motivation. Instead, a goal was a stimulus that gave rise to motivation. Gardner focused on classifying reasons for second language study, which he then identified as orientations (1985, p. 54). He found two main orientations through his research:

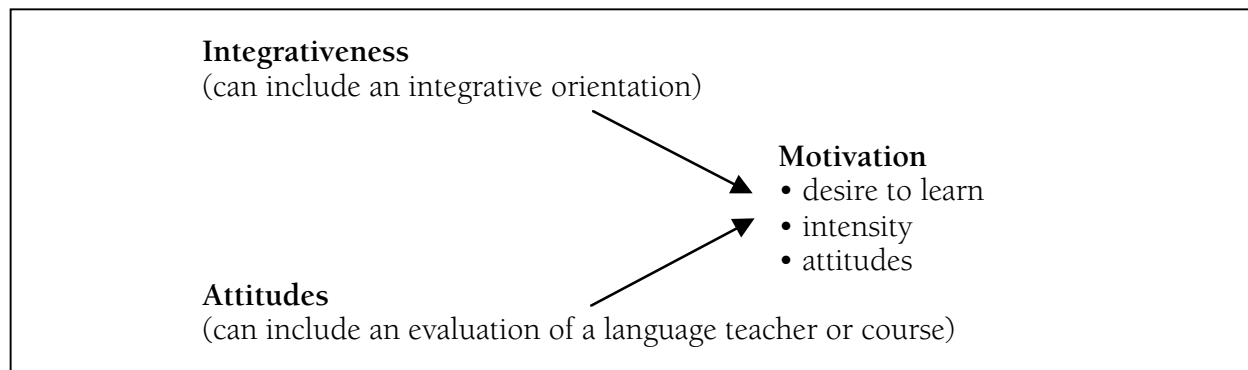
1. integrative: a favorable attitude toward the target language community; possibly a wish to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through use of the language.
2. instrumental: a more functional reason for learning the target language, such as job promotion, or a language requirement.

Gardner specifically delineated the difference between these orientations and actual motivation. Motivation “refers to a complex of three characteristics which may or may not be related to any particular orientation. These characteristics are attitudes toward learning the language, desire to learn the language, and motivational intensity” (Gardner, 1985, p. 54). For example, an integrative orientation was a class of reasons suggesting why a person might undertake language study, including a desire to integrate with a target language community. By itself, this simply reflected a goal which might or might not lack motivational power. On the other hand, an integrative *motive* included this orientation, plus the motivation, which included desire, motivational intensity, and a number of other attitudes involving the target language community.

Gardner’s socio-educational model of motivation focused on the integrative motive. Motivation was the central concept of the model, but there were also some factors which affected this, such as integrativeness and attitudes. These were other factors that influenced individual differences, and were seen as complex variables.

## Figure 1: Gardner's Socio-Educational Model of Motivation

(Adapted from Dörnyei, Z. (1994). *Modern Language Journal*, 78, p. 517)



### Criticism of Gardner

Gardner received criticism for focusing so much on the integrative motive. However, I think some of his assertions have been misconstrued. Gardner himself stated that since the SLA process is extremely complex, when considering motivation to learn a language the complexity must also be realized. Motivation must be looked at in totality and in relation to other characteristics of the individual. I think Gardner in no way meant to limit the possibilities of orientation to two classes. He simply found that studies have demonstrated “that subjects who select integrative reasons over instrumental ones as indicative of themselves evidence higher levels of motivational intensity” (Gardner, 1985, p. 53). Gardner found the integrative motive to have an extremely high significance in results of his studies.

Clément and Kruidenier (1983) designed a research study in order to specify further factors that influence motivation. From survey results, four different orientations to language study were identified. The instrumental orientation was an important factor, along with reasons such as travel, seeking new friendships, and acquiring knowledge. They acknowledged that the “relative status of learner and target groups as well as the availability of (or at least familiarity with) the latter in the immediate environment are important determinants of the emergence of orientations” (1983, p. 288). The challenge was to look not at the universality of integrative and instrumental orientations, but to look more at “who learns what in what milieu” (1983, p. 288).

Ely (1986) did work looking specifically at a FL setting, with learners of Spanish in Northern California. He designed the study wanting to address the possibility that the integrative/instrumental dichotomy did not capture the full spectrum of student motivation. To his surprise, there were clusterings of motivation that resembled instrumental and integrative orientations, even though the survey was not formed on the basis of that prior theory.

Crookes and Schmidt (1991) also worked to move beyond the instrumental and integrative orientations, specifically looking at how motivation includes both internal and external factors. They identified four internal and attitudinal factors:

1. interest in the language based on existing attitudes, experience and background knowledge
2. relevance (some needs being met by language learning)
3. expectancy of success or failure
4. outcomes (extrinsic/intrinsic rewards)

Three internal characteristics that they specified were:

1. the language learner decides to engage in language learning
2. the language learner persists over time and interruptions
3. the language learner maintains a high activity level

### Dörnyei's Model

Dörnyei was also concerned with expanding the model of motivation beyond two orientations, specifically in a FL setting. He stated that “the exact nature of the social and pragmatic dimensions of second language motivation is always dependent on who learns what languages where” (1994a, p. 275). Contrary to Gardner’s focus on integrativeness, Dörnyei (1994a) asserted that in a FL setting instrumental orientation would have a greater influence on language learners. He created a model of FL learning motivation that could account for and include some of the expanding views of motivation. Three different levels of factors were included, which not only allowed for the inclusion of orientations but also for specific situations that involved the learner and the surrounding context.

The first level in Dörnyei’s model is the language level, which encompasses both integrative and instrumental motivational subsystems focusing on reactions and attitudes toward the target language. The second level is the learner level, which focuses on the individual’s reaction to the language and the learning situation. At this level different cognitive theories of motivation are included. Cognitive theories of motivation view motivation as a function of someone’s thoughts, not as an instinct, need, drive, or state. The source of action, then, is when information is encoded and transformed into a belief (Dörnyei, 1994a, p. 276). Different factors of cognitive theories, such as learned helplessness (Weiner, 1992), a resigned, pessimistic state which develops when someone feels success is impossible, could be added to this model.

The third level is the learning situation level, which takes into account specific motivational factors connected with the teacher, the course, and the group of language learners

with which an individual interacts. This level consists of extrinsic and intrinsic motives in different areas. Extrinsic motivation consists of doing “something because of an external reward that may be obtained, while intrinsic motivation is demonstrated when we do something because we get rewards enough from the activity itself” (Schmidt et al., 1996, p. 14). These two motives are not necessarily mutually antagonistic. However, extrinsic motivation can undermine intrinsic motivation. Traditional school settings often cultivate extrinsic motivation (Brown, 1990, p. 388), but under certain circumstances classroom rewards can be combined with or lead to intrinsic motivation.

Dörnyei (1996) specified that each of these different levels, language, learner and learning situation, seem to have an effect independent of the others. He stated that “...each of the three levels of motivation exert their influence independently of the others and have enough power to nullify the effects of the motives associated with the other two levels” (1996, p. 78). However, in regard to his framework, he also said that “many of its components have been verified by very little or no empirical research in the L2 field” (1994a, p. 283).

**Figure 2: Dörnyei’s Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation**

<b>LANGUAGE LEVEL</b>	Integrative Motivational Subsystem Instrumental Motivational Subsystem
<b>LEARNER LEVEL</b>	Need for Achievement Self-Confidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Use Anxiety</li> <li>• Perceived L2 Competence</li> <li>• Causal Attributions</li> <li>• Self-Efficacy</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING SITUATION LEVEL</b>	
<i>Course-Specific Motivational Components</i>	Interest Relevance Expectancy Self-Efficacy
<i>Teacher-Specific Motivational Components</i>	Affiliative Drive Authority Type Direct Socialization of Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modeling</li> <li>• Task Presentation</li> <li>• Feedback</li> </ul>
<i>Group-Specific Motivational Components</i>	Goal-Orientedness Norm & Reward System Group Cohesion Classroom Goal Structure

Along with Dörnyei, Oxford called for research regarding FL settings: “perhaps instrumental motivation or orientation should have a greater prominence in theory and research, at least in certain settings, most notably FL environments” (1996b, p. 4). Oxford also called for further expansion of models into the research on motivation in SLA: “For the sake of students worldwide, we cannot afford to restrict ourselves to a small set of motivational variables, especially when we know from research in other fields that motivation is an extraordinarily complex, multifaceted, and important construct” (1996b, p. 1). Therefore, it is necessary for more research to explore the nature of a FL setting in language instruction, how that affects motivation in learners, and to include the possibility of a wide range of motivational factors which influence the language experience.

One specific area in which motivational factors can be seen at work is in the use of different learning strategies. Studies by Oxford and Nyikos show that the “degree of motivation is the most powerful influence on how and when students use language learning strategies” (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, p. 53). However, it is important to first distinguish specifically what learning strategies are.

### **Learning Strategies**

Learning strategies are “operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information...(they are) specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990, p. 8). Cohen specifies that language learning strategies are “those processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or foreign language, through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about that language” (1998, p. 4).

The search for learning strategies began with Rubin and Stern in 1975, when attention was drawn to what makes a person a good language learner. Research in this area addresses “assumptions found throughout the literature that the difference between successful and unsuccessful language learners is either a factor of the quantity, quality or combination of strategies that learners of each group use” (Kaylani, 1996, p. 77). At this point a distinction between the learning of a language and acquisition of a language is necessary. While not mutually exclusive, learning is a conscious focus on language rules, while acquisition is an unconscious and spontaneous occurrence in a naturalistic language setting that leads to conversational fluency (Oxford, 1990, p. 4).

Learners at all levels use strategies. Usually, more proficient language learners use a wider range in more situations. Strategy use varies according to the task, stage of the learner, age of the learner, the context of learning, individual learning styles, and cultural differences. Current research is now showing that the difference between successful and unsuccessful learners is more the quality of strategies used, not quantity. Successful language students do not necessarily use more strategies, but instead use different combinations of strategies (Kaylani, 1996). Successful strategy users have the ability to choose the strategy(ies) suitable for the task.

Many different categories of learning strategies have been documented. Oxford (1990) created a taxonomy of different strategies which is divided into two main, equally important categories. The first, direct strategies, simply involves direct use of language. Under this heading are three areas: strategies dealing with memory, the entering and retrieving of information; cognition, the manipulation of language for reception and production; and compensation, the overcoming of limitations in existing knowledge. The second main category is indirect strategies, which support language learning, but do not directly involve using the language. Under this heading are three areas: strategies dealing with metacognition, the organization and evaluation of learning; affective strategies, the management of emotions and attitudes; and social strategies, the learning of a language with the help of others.

### **Figure 3: Oxford's Taxonomy of Learning Strategies**

#### **DIRECT STRATEGIES**

- I. *Memory Strategies*
  - A. Creating mental linkages
  - B. Applying images and sound
  - C. Reviewing well
  - D. Employing action
- II. *Cognitive Strategies*
  - A. Practicing
  - B. Receiving and sending messages
  - C. Analyzing and reasoning
  - D. Creating structure of input and output
- III. *Compensation Strategies*
  - A. Guessing intelligently
  - B. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing

#### **INDIRECT STRATEGIES**

- I. *Metacognitive Strategies*
  - A. Centering your learning
  - B. Arranging and planning your learning
  - C. Evaluating your learning

- II. *Affective* Strategies
  - A. Lowering your anxiety
  - B. Encouraging yourself
  - C. Taking your emotional temperature
- III. *Social* Strategies
  - A. Asking questions
  - B. Cooperating with others
  - C. Empathizing with others

There are difficulties with assessing learning strategies (Cohen & Scott, 1996). The selection of strategies is an internal process; it is more than likely that learners will not reveal adequately what strategies they are using. Most of the research tools to collect data on strategies involve self-report or generalized statements about language use. One example of an inventory, the Strategies Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), has learners commenting on the frequency of eighty different items which represent the six different direct and indirect strategies of Oxford's taxonomy (Oxford, 1990). The results show how frequently strategies are used in general, and which group of strategies is used the most. The SILL was created as a cross-sectional tool, however, and is not task-based. Another option for documenting learning strategies is through the use of a language diary. Diary studies can be used to collect data on a learner's strategy over a period of time, "an individual's written reflections on current language learning" (Cohen & Scott, 1996, p. 99). While there is debate about the usefulness of diary studies in the field of SLA, they do allow research to focus on language learning specifically from the learner's point of view (Bailey, 1991, p. 83).

In a FL setting, then, more research is needed to observe the wide range of factors which motivate and influence students to persevere in their efforts. Use of a language diary cannot only include documentation of learning strategies, it can also record a learner's insights into motivational factors. The benefit of using a language diary also ensures that these issues will be recorded over a length of time, offering insight into the relationship between motivation and learning strategies.

## CHAPTER 2: THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Most of the research studies looking at motivation and language learning strategies are large-scale, one-time surveys given to language students. In contrast, the purpose of this study was to look at motivation and learning strategies through a long-term case study. The data was collected through a language diary. As the diary was written, no specific focus was identified. It was only after the completion of the diary that these specific questions were addressed:

1. To what extent does a language learner's diary reflect a range of motivational factors?
2. What does a language diary reveal about the use of learning strategies by a language learner?
3. How do the results of a personality-type inventory compare with the data in a language diary?
4. How do the results of a learning strategies inventory compare with the learning strategies recorded in a language diary?
5. In the data from a ten-week diary study, what relationships can be hypothesized regarding motivational factors and choices of learning strategies?

### Sample

For this research, the subject was myself. As a teacher of English as a Second Language (ESL), I have often been aware that my own lack of language learning experience is somewhat detrimental to my ability and finesse as a language teacher. Therefore, during my time in the Master of Arts program in ESL at the University of Minnesota, I decided to enroll in a language class. There were actually two reasons for this; one was that I needed to fulfill a language proficiency for my degree. The other reason was that I wanted to experience being a student again in a language classroom. During a ten-week quarter of first-year Korean, I kept a detailed diary of my experience.

### Background as a language learner – French

Since data in the diary is closely linked to my previous experiences and my capacity as a student, it is necessary to provide some background. Before enrolling in Korean 1012, I had experience with two other languages. My first experience with a foreign language began in eighth grade in a junior high school in British Columbia. Because Canada is a bilingual nation, a year of French study is required at this grade, and ongoing study is then optional. I opted for four years,

though several factors discouraged my pursuit. My initial teacher was very unenthusiastic about language instruction. The result of his chaotic class was that I never felt I received a good foundation in French. For the next three years, I always felt slightly behind, slightly amiss in my pronunciation, and slightly confused by the entire language. At the end of four years, I felt that I still did not have a grasp of the French language. I did not feel competent in communication; I had never been encouraged in the classroom to communicate in French. My listening ability was not good, either. I only remember feeling baffled whenever the teacher spoke. At that time I decided that not only would I not need French in the future, but I was also a poor language learner; I pursued French no further.

### *Background as a language learner – Chinese*

In college, I was exposed to my second foreign language. I became interested in different cultures and countries, and was an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructor in China, first for a summer before my senior year of college, and then for two years after graduation. Because of my experience with French, I went to China without much thought to the language. My focus was teaching English, and therefore communicating in English with my students. While in China I decided that two months was not enough time to acquire much Chinese; I did not make language study a priority. When I returned again, and I knew I wanted to try living there, I thought I could pick up a little of the language as needed. The longer I stayed in that country, though, the more I began to realize the absurdity of moving to a country without much expectation of learning the language. Even though I still had a mental block that I was not good at language learning, I wanted to try again. The longer I stayed, the more I yearned for a chance to communicate, to have independence, and to really learn more about the Chinese. I also had an American colleague who modeled how making Chinese a priority opened doors for her in relation to friendships and job opportunities. Off and on then, throughout my two years, I experienced different tutorial situations. By the end of two years I had a level of what I called “survival Mandarin.” I could buy food at the market, order in restaurants, use the phone system if I had to, buy train tickets, and answer some of the most commonly asked small talk questions addressed to foreigners. However, I still carried with me a feeling that I just was not “getting it.” I felt frustrated if I compared my progress to other language learners at my school. Some of my tutors did not have the ability to explain their own language to me. I struggled to make sense of the tonal system. Many of the same frustrations resurfaced with Chinese as with French: a lack of

success, a focus on how much I could not understand, and a feeling that I was never quite understanding everything correctly.

It was with these feelings, then, that I eventually entered the Korean classroom. I was not only aware of them, but I wanted to address them again and discover that in many ways they were unfounded. Part of my decision to begin Korean was to allow myself a fresh start. Hopefully, a new language would allow me to put aside some of my old fears and lack of confidence in regards to the language acquisition process.

### *Background as a language teacher*

Another part of my background as a language learner has also been indirectly affected by my six years of teaching a language. I realized as soon as I entered the Korean classroom that I had many ideas of how concepts should be presented, some of the best ways to use time in the class, and ways to encourage students to communicate. Despite the fact that I have never felt successful at learning a language, I have never felt unsuccessful as a language teacher. Part of that comes from the fact that I was well-trained in “education”; my undergraduate degree was in English Secondary Education. When I first began to teach ESL, I simply knew how to structure a class, how to plan the use of time, how to manage discussions, and how to deal with grading and paperwork. I also have always enjoyed explaining concepts to people. It was through experience, then, that I learned how to actually teach “language.” Students’ comments and responses in class, the questions they asked, and the difficulties they had all helped shape a different concept of language than the one I had experienced as a learner of language. All of these background experiences greatly influenced my experience in Korean 1012.

### *Background to choosing Korean*

Because of my experience in China, my first choice for language study was Chinese. When I went to enroll fall quarter at the University of Minnesota, though, either all the Chinese classes were full or there was a schedule conflict. I decided to wait to study a language. However, during that quarter I began to entertain the notion of teaching in Korea after finishing my degree. After discovering that Korean classes were offered, I contacted the first-year instructor and asked permission to begin a quarter late. I was given permission, and therefore I began Korean 1012 during winter quarter, a quarter behind all the other first-year students. In order to prepare for class, I spent a month in preparation by going through the text for fall quarter and memorizing the pronunciation of the Korean alphabet.

Besides being in a unique situation by starting the class late, I also experienced another setback. After I had decided to study Korean and had already contacted the instructor, the Korean economy suffered a severe decline. Therefore, even though I continued with my language study, I entered the class without plans to work in Korea in the future. As a result, I had many doubts at the beginning of the course whether I should continue the class or not. Some of this confusion is evident in the diary. However, my final decision was not only to continue studying Korean for the specific quarter in which I kept the language diary, I also continued with the study of Korean for two more quarters.

### Description of Korean 1012

Korean 1012 had twenty-five students. Everyone except myself and one other student had been enrolled in the fall quarter. The other new student had studied at least one quarter of Korean previously at another school. My experience in the class was greatly affected by the fact that I began the program a quarter behind most students. Prior to the first night of class, I had spent time learning the character system and pronunciation; I also had started learning key vocabulary. Most of the students in the class were of Korean descent, either adopted or second-generation Koreans. There was one Japanese student, and only five non-Asians in the class including me. There was a wide range of ability in the class. Some of the second-generation Koreans' oral skills and listening comprehension were far above the other students who had just been introduced to the Korean language that year.

The class met twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, from 6:20 PM to 8:50 PM. Every evening there was a ten to fifteen minute break, announced by the teacher at an appropriate stopping point. The class met in a large classroom, with very large tables that were positioned in rows facing the blackboard. During the quarter neither the teacher nor students ever tried to change this arrangement. Most of the students sat far back in the class, so the farthest row from the teacher was the fullest. Students tended to sit in the same vicinity every night, and it seemed that friendly cliques had formed between these groups of students during the first quarter.

The syllabus was organized by grammatical structures, which were mostly introduced by the teacher. There was one teacher and one teaching assistant (TA). At the beginning of the quarter it was explained that the TA would be teaching the class next quarter, so she was given ample teaching opportunities to prepare. The TA was responsible for every Tuesday evening, which included a weekly quiz, a discussion of the quiz, and review. Many times the TA also

introduced new grammar points. The weekly quizzes covered listening, verb conjugation, particles, sentence translation, and sometimes vocabulary. On Thursday nights, the teacher introduced new grammar information and listened to the recitation of oral dialogs.

In the class, new information was presented according to the grammar-translation method. The teacher would introduce each grammar point by first writing down rules and explanations on the blackboard. Students would copy down all the rules, and then listen as the teacher read the explanations from the board and wrote a few extra examples alongside the explanations. Most of the instruction was in English, with some comments in Korean. Usually, if the teacher spoke in Korean, she would translate in English because she was concerned about listening comprehension.

I must admit that I was not the typical undergraduate student enrolled in the class. I had specific reasons for wanting to experience language learning in a classroom setting, and this strongly influenced my perception about what occurred in the classroom. Since my purpose for attending the class was not only for language learning, but also to experience classroom life again, I was a very critical student. Also, I had just received training in a masters' program in communicative language education. The language that I chose to take, however, comes from a different cultural and methodological background in regard to language instruction. I was, without specifically focusing on it, receiving covert cultural instruction in how classes and language instruction function in Korea. I believe that I was taught Korean in a very similar manner as to how my teacher had been instructed in English. Even though I was aware of this difference while taking the class, I still was extremely critical in regard to the methodology that was modeled for me. This critical tone often comes through in the diary.

## **Instrumentation**

The main form of data collection was through a diary. There has been much debate about the usefulness of diary studies in the field of SLA. Some concerns focus around the small number of subjects, the subjective nature of data collection, and a lack of generalizable conclusions (Bailey, 1991; Bailey & Oschner, 1983; Brown, 1985; Long, 1980; Schmidt & Frota, 1986). Schmidt and Frota voice the concern:

In addition to being idiosyncratic and of dubious generalizability, what the (diary studies) report is subjective, already filtered through the perceptions and possibly the biases of the learner (especially important when the learner is a linguist professionally interested in SLA theory), and exceedingly difficult to verify. With respect to the processes of learning, these are important limitations, since those who believe that language acquisition goes on almost entirely below the level of

conscious awareness might argue that one simply cannot observe oneself learning a language (1986, p. 238).

However, there are benefits to this kind of research. In the case of most diary studies, generalizability is not an issue because it simply is not the purpose of the study. Instead, Bailey describes the purpose as being to “understand language learning phenomena and related variables from the learner’s point of view” (1991, p. 83). Diary studies deal with natural data in the most natural setting possible. There is always the potential to discover or rediscover factors that appear to be important from the learner’s point of view, not from the outsider’s point of view. Factors could be identified that researchers might not have previously considered to be variables worth studying. Diary studies also raise factors not controlled in experimental research. Often, the authors write detailed and comprehensive descriptions of their experiences; it seems the best way to focus on individual learner variables (Bailey, 1991).

Besides the diary, two other forms of assessment were used. The Myers-Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI) is a 126-item, forced-choice, self-report questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to show personality preferences in four different dimensions based on Jung and Myers and Brigg (Ehrman, 1996a). The other form of assessment was the SILL (Oxford, 1990). The SILL is an 80-item, Likert-scaled, self-report instrument that assesses the frequency with which learners use different techniques for language learning (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990).

## **Data Collection**

The language diary was handwritten in a small, bound book. Entry length varied from several pages to a few short paragraphs. Towards the beginning of the quarter I wrote more, simply because my enthusiasm was greater and I also had more time. As the quarter progressed I tended to write less, reflecting not only an increasingly busy schedule, but a lower motivational level to record all my thoughts. Entries were recorded three times a week. Two entries were written either after the class, or on the next day. One entry per week was written on the weekend, when I had more time to reflect on the week. Often, I would add more information about the class then. I found that keeping a diary was both time-consuming and enjoyable. There were times when I found it a more attractive task than actually studying Korean. The process of keeping a diary helped me focus on the actual experience of being a student in a language class.

After the course was finished, I took the handwritten diary entries and entered them onto the computer. As I typed each entry into a word processing format, I also completed simple editing tasks. The names of people mentioned in the diary were changed to keep their

anonymity. I also added a few details for the sake of clarity. At the beginning of Korean 1012, I was interested in keeping a language diary simply to discover what issues were important to me as a language learner. During the course, I did not focus my writing on any specific point. I deliberately kept the purpose of the diary unfocused in order for me to notice what surfaced as important variables in this particular experience. After completion of the course and the diary, I noticed that both motivational factors and learning strategies played a role in my experience. It was then that I began to look at the data more specifically to explore those two issues. Therefore, the data from the diary entries was not biased by a conscious, pre-determined focus on motivation or learning strategies.

Besides the diary, the MBTI results were from a questionnaire administered in 1992. The SILL was taken one month after completing Korean 1012.

### **Data Analysis**

Initially, the diary was written with no specific focus in mind. After reading the completed diary, I noted the frequency of comments pertaining both to motivation and learning strategies. At this point, I decided to further explore those two specific topics. After reading research literature in both areas, the diary was analyzed according to content analysis guidelines, which involve drawing conclusions from the observations of content, set out by Stempel (1989). First of all, the unit of analysis selection was required for two different areas. From my review of the literature, I chose previously constructed models for units of analysis. Dörnyei's model of motivation was chosen because more research is needed to support this model. Oxford's taxonomy of strategies was chosen because of its time-proven results and its correlation to the SILL.

To analyze the diary, I first read through the data and made note of any comments which I interpreted as pertaining to either motivation or learning strategies. This was done in a very careful manner; two different copies of the diary were used so that identification of comments for one topic would not influence the possible identification of those comments for the other. It was only after all possible comments had been identified that they were then categorized into the different models. Most of the comments regarding learning strategies were straightforward and descriptive; it was not a difficult task to identify which learning strategy was represented. For different motivational factors, however, there occasionally was a need to see beyond the actual written statement to the intent. Since the data was from my own diary, I was able to understand the entire context of each statement and therefore categorized the comments as thoroughly as

possible. This process of identification and categorization was actually completed twice in an effort to ensure that the analysis of comments was as consistent as possible. After all comments were categorized, I tallied the number of comments made regarding a specific category. In counting the number of comments per category, it is necessary to note that the highest number of comments in a certain category does not specifically indicate this as the most important in my experience. The numbers really serve as a comparison measure as to which category was more noteworthy, and therefore had perhaps a greater influence on the experience. Besides separately analyzing the diary for comments in both areas, I also identified and listed which comments had been specifically included in both models to see if there was any observable relationship between motivational factors and the choice of learning strategies. The results of the analysis for learning strategies were also compared with the results of the MBTI and the SILL.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Motivation

1. **To what extent does a language learner’s diary reflect a range of motivational factors?**

Overall, there were a total of 106 comments in the diary that I identified as pertaining to motivational factors. These comments were categorized into Dörnyei’s motivational model, which consists of three different levels of motivation. The data will be discussed according to the different levels.

#### The Language Level

The first level of Dörnyei’s model is the language level, which is the most general of all levels and includes orientations and motives related to the target language. Surprisingly, at this level Dörnyei takes a Gardnerian approach by specifying two motivational subsystems which consist of “loosely related, context-dependent motives.” (1994, p. 279). These subsystems are, of course, integrative and instrumental. Again, at this level the focus is on the language, and the knowledge, expectations, and goals of the learner which relate to the specific language and language choice.

#### **LANGUAGE LEVEL**

Integrative Motivational Subsystem  
Instrumental Motivational Subsystem

(From Figure 2: Dörnyei’s Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation; p. 5)

In the diary (see Appendix 1), there were only 12 comments pertaining to the language level of the motivational construct. 7 of these were identified in the integrative subsystem. These comments were recorded over the course of the ten-week class. The first integrative comment projected a possible conversational situation in Korea.

I think if I ever went to Korea I would make many taboo errors in addressing people, older, my age, younger. And how do you establish the relationship when you can use the intimate form? Especially if I were to go there, as an outsider? I wonder how forgiving Koreans would be to an outsider, if it’s obvious I’m at least making an attempt to speak their language? (Jan. 10)

Any integrative comment after that only happened when I was in more of a Korean context. For example, time spent with Korean friends inspired integrative reflections.

Already I've met some new Korean people...As we were meeting, another Korean friend of mine came up to talk and I tried to introduce her to Hyun (*a language partner*). But, they didn't know each other and I didn't know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture (or language, for that matter!) They had to feel each other out. I felt quite awkward, and picked up that the two of them did, also. Is this a typical way that Koreans feel each other out? How can they know how to address the other in the hierarchy of things when they first meet? (Jan. 12)

On another occasion, I went to a fund-raiser for Korean students at the University of Minnesota:

Last Saturday I went to "Taste of Korea." ...for me, the funny part of the afternoon was when Sherry (*a Korean friend*) came up as I was eating and whispered something in Korean in my ear. My first reaction was to freeze. I understood the verb "to eat" but didn't understand anything else. And I wanted to impress her! But it didn't work. Instead, all I felt was awkward. (Feb. 21)

My awkwardness was a result of not being able to properly respond in such a situation. I was aware that what she had whispered in my ear was probably a stock phrase usually made when eating or tasting food. However, I keenly felt at that moment that I had no cultural awareness or language ability on which to draw. By the fifth week of the class I admitted how hard it was, in studying a FL, to find authentic Korean settings.

The hard part about learning a foreign language in the USA is simply making it a part of your life. (Feb. 5)

Whenever I was able to experience more of the Korean culture, such as meeting with friends, enjoying a Korean restaurant, or watching a Korean video, I demonstrated a desire and concern to integrate with others around and to follow the correct cultural protocol which the situation required. However, there were insufficient opportunities to fuel this type of motivation. The classroom alone did not model or provide enough encouragement for me to pursue a more integrative orientation.

In regard to an instrumental motivational subsystem, 5 comments, slightly less than integrative, were identified. It is worth noting that these comments were recorded only in the first two weeks of the course. The first entry concerned my actual motivation for enrolling in the class.

First of all, I've been thinking about my actual motivation for studying this language. After initially being sold on the idea of going to Korea, now I just don't know, and there are times when I wonder why I didn't try harder to get into Chinese classes. Why am I going to put so much effort into this if I have no clue about the future? (Jan. 8)

This concern and doubt at the beginning of the class manifested itself in different ways throughout the course. Once I had actually committed to taking the class, I decided to go ahead with the experience and tried to push those doubts aside. Therefore, for the rest of the time, I tended to focus exclusively on the actual class. I decided to use the situation as an opportunity to experience studying a language so that I could eventually become a better language teacher. As I report later, the majority of my comments were categorized in the learning situation level. In the larger picture, I see this emphasis on the learning situation as still an instrumental orientation. I used the different factors of the class, and the fact that I was working on a research project, to keep me motivated to continue studying. An example of this is found in the fact that I registered for the class S/N instead of A-F. I had not wanted to worry about the grade factor, especially since I began a quarter late. However, I had to remind myself about this in the diary, clearly demonstrating that even if I stated my intention of taking this class only to experience a language learning situation, I still, however briefly, was conscious about grades.

I'm pretty sure that I registered for this class pass or fail, so the little grades don't really matter much to me. I'm in this just to see what happens. (Jan. 13)

### The Learner Level

The next level of Dörnyei's model is more specific and focuses on the learner. The learner level "involves a complex of affects and cognitions that form fairly stable personality traits" (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 279). Dörnyei specifies two main motivational processes at this level, a need for achievement, and self-confidence. Self-confidence is another complex factor, so Dörnyei defines it further with four sub-categories:

- a) attribution theory: past failures and successes affect the future goal and expectancy of language learning.
- b) self-efficacy: judgment of a language learner's ability to perform a specific action, which can develop not only from past accomplishments, but also from observation of peers, persuasion, reinforcement and evaluation, affect the outcome of language learning.
- c) language anxiety
- d) perceived target language competence

## LEARNER LEVEL

### Need for Achievement Self-Confidence

- Language Use Anxiety
- Perceived L2 Competence
- Causal Attributions
- Self-Efficacy

(From Figure 2: Dörnyei's Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation; p. 5)

identified as pertaining to motivational factors in regard to the learner. The first category was need for achievement, which had 8 comments. At the very beginning of the quarter, my comments showed a genuine interest in language achievement, such as mastering the written system. During the first week I voiced a concern.

I feel like identity in this class is based on language ability. At this point, I really don't have much ability, so in that sense I feel like a non-entity. I'm a deadweight—trying to listen and copy down as much as I can, but not wanting or knowing how to respond or answer to anything. (Jan. 8)

This concern to develop a language entity must be considered in the context of a FL class. I was concerned about my language ability because I wanted to survive and do well in the class. Besides taking this class for reasons such as writing a paper, getting high points on quizzes and appearing successful were also motivational factors. Therefore, my comments quickly turned to such topics as needing to know necessary vocabulary for the class and whether or not I was happy with quiz grades. Therefore, for the majority of the course I defined achievement as achieving good grades, or as doing well in the class.

First quiz in class today. I just had to laugh inside, because I thought it was funny that after only one week of instruction I was writing a second quarter quiz. The really amusing thing is that I felt I did okay...tonight I was actually pretty happy with myself, for at least appearing like I have it together. (Jan. 13)

Even though I had registered for the class pass/fail, I was still conscious about being a good student, or at least appearing to be a good student.

Under the category of self-confidence in the learner level model, there are four sub-categories. The first is language use anxiety, which was reflected throughout the quarter in 10 different comments. At the beginning of the class, I experienced a sense of angst, which even exhibited itself in the form of bizarre dreams.

I woke up again last night with little Korean characters running through my head. They didn't quite all form words, though. I remember trying so hard to make them correctly fit together, thinking that comprehension would then come, but it never did. I wonder why these dreams? Am I really feeling stressed? The answer,

of course, is yes! I feel like I need to catch up fast, and it's not happening. (Jan. 12)

This initial anxiety was a vague feeling of being behind in every aspect of language use in the class. As I learned more and felt more comfortable in the class, this anxiety diminished somewhat. Later in the quarter, the most specific cause of anxiety was speaking Korean, whether it was in front of the class, on tape, or during a group performance.

It's so amazing to feel so nervous to stand up in front of the class and recite a few words. And I usually stand up in front of classes! But, this was different. (Jan. 15)

I felt nervous once I started to record and had to do it a few times. (Feb. 3)

It does feel strange to hear those strange sounds come out of my mouth. (Feb. 10)

The next sub-category under self-confidence was perceived L2 competence. For this I found 6 applicable comments which also were scattered throughout the quarter. One focus for competence, which I actually considered lack of competence on my part, was vocabulary. Since I began Korean during the second quarter, my level of vocabulary was far behind the other students. By the end of the class, even though I had acquired more vocabulary, I still knew my own limitations. As I reviewed for the final exam, I was aware that I simply had to accept the number of words I had acquired over the ten-week course. It was too late to speed up the process two days before the final.

Either I know this stuff by now or I don't, and what I need to do before the final is review and remind myself of what I do know. (Mar. 10)

Besides vocabulary, I also was aware of my low competence in reading, and in a canny ability I had to survive language classes and exams without a full understanding of what was happening.

First quiz in class today...The really amusing thing is that I felt I did okay, for quite a number of reasons...I could get by with guessing a lot...another part of the test was on conjugating verbs. Well, I knew the rules to do this - most of the decisions come from what vowel the verb stem ends in. At this point I can easily recognize vowels, so I conjugated to my heart's content. Did I know any of the verbs I was working with? Not one of them! But, for that part, meaning wasn't necessary. Another part of the quiz was circling the correct subject particle, again based on vowels and consonant endings of each noun. So, I had no trouble with that. (Jan. 13)

I had a keen sense, then, of my competence to survive and do well grade-wise in a FL class.

The next sub-category under self-confidence, with 8 applicable comments, was causal attributions. This definitely affected my attitude and psychological approach to certain aspects of

language learning. In the diary, I mentioned both previous language learning experiences with Chinese and French; I also made reference to other classroom situations, where again I was able to achieve good grades whether or not I understood the subject matter completely. The causal attribution I ascribed to my ability to survive was a positive force in helping me to finish this class.

...throughout my entire educational career I've always "survived" classes well, regardless of whether I felt like I understood the material well. I'm reminded of my French experience - getting A's in each class, but never feeling like I learned French. Following rules is something I can do quite well! (Jan. 13)

Luckily I've always been able to memorize things well short-term. (Jan. 15)

Negative experiences surfaced when I dealt with frustration at procrastination.

I'm so good at putting off studying, and that really frustrates me. This is how it went for Chinese, and now for Korean...Why do I put off studying? Why is it the last thing I'll sit down to do? Is it simply laziness, or is there more to it? And if there is more to it - what is that? A deep-seated belief still that I'm not good at languages? (Feb. 3)

I also thought about my previous language learning experience in China to explain, predict, and maybe even validate some of my behavior with Korean.

Part of my problem with learning a language is my personality! Fancy that! I've thought this before, especially with my experience in China. For one thing, I am an introvert. That's all there is to it. Put me in a new situation, and I'm shy. My natural tendency is to observe. I want time to see and hear and experience, and then I'll feel more comfortable to act. I don't like going out on a limb in unknown territory. Over time, when I feel comfortable in a situation, then I feel more comfortable with taking risks...as I learn a language, especially coming in new to an established class, I am just not going to volunteer much...I often get by without speaking hardly a word of Korean in class. And what is different here than my experience in China is that there I was immersed in Chinese. So, I actually picked up more of it than I usually gave myself credit for. (Feb. 5)

In trying to understand my behavior and reaction to the Korean class, I relied on past experiences and emotions to understand and interpret what was happening around me. Causal attributions definitely played a factor in the entire language learning experience.

One last sub-category under self-control is self-efficacy. Throughout the diary I only found 4 comments. One small moment of pride occurred at a Korean restaurant with a group of friends. I was excited to show off my reading skills and help them decipher the Korean menu and the bill. However, the other comments were negative, often demonstrating a feeling of incompetence with the language. Whenever students had to repeat the teacher's speech, I had

trouble keeping up with the class, partly due to reading skills and partly due to the strangeness of Korean in my mouth. Instead of rising to the occasion, I often found ways to avoid the difficulties. One day, our teacher taught us a song.

When we started singing, the melody was pretty simple, but again, whenever she tried to speed us up, my mouth simply wouldn't keep up. I tried, but ended up butchering words, having entirely wrong vowels come out of my mouth...there were times that I just ended up humming the melody. (Jan. 19)

I have trouble getting Korean out of my mouth. Sometimes in class we have to repeat the teacher, and I just can't read fast enough and make my mouth do what I want it to...I often give up and not say certain words. (Mar. 3)

Self-efficacy can develop from past accomplishments and reinforcement; I wonder if my reaction at the end of the quarter to give up in certain situations was based primarily on my reactions and experiences from the beginning of the quarter.

### The Learning Situation Level

The third level of Dörnyei's model is the most specific, focusing on the place where language learning is happening, including the teacher, the required textbook and other such factors. In the diary, this third level received the most number of comments, 56 in all. There are three areas in this learning situation level.

#### **LEARNING SITUATION LEVEL**

*Course-Specific Motivational Components*

Interest  
Relevance  
Expectancy  
Self-Efficacy

*Teacher-Specific Motivational Components*

Affiliative Drive  
Authority Type  
Direct Socialization of Motivation

- Modeling
- Task Presentation
- Feedback

*Group-Specific Motivational Components*

Goal-Orientedness  
Norm & Reward System  
Group Cohesion  
Classroom Goal Structure

(From Figure 2: Dörnyei's Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation; p. 5)

### A. Course-specific

The first level is a course-specific category, which includes factors such as the syllabus, teaching materials, and teaching methods. Dörnyei specifies four factors with regard to the course:

- a) Interest: Related to intrinsic motivation, this reflects whether an individual has a desire to know more about the language or the language task.
- b) Relevance: This is measured by the extent to which a student feels the instruction is connected to personal needs or goals.
- c) Expectancy: The perceived likelihood of success can greatly affect students.
- d) Satisfaction: Also important to the student is the outcome of an activity, which can include both extrinsic rewards such as praise or a good grade, or intrinsic rewards, such as enjoyment or pride.

In the diary, the category of interest only received 5 comments. What I found interesting about these comments was the fact that I only showed interest in a class or event if it was something I had previously used in my teaching.

I was excited to think about learning a song, because I love to sing. I also have taught my students songs, so I thought this would be a good time to experience!  
(Jan. 19)

...we did a lesson looking at family vocabulary. I had to laugh as we did this, because I've done this with my own students many times. (Jan. 29)

The interest, then, was based on my anticipation of a chance to experience what I often have done with my own students, one of my prime reasons for enrolling in the class. Unfortunately, this only occurred five times: with instruction of a song, a family tree activity, recording voices on tape once for homework, watching a video, and a communicative lesson about Valentine's Day. These different examples, and the fact that I noted them so clearly, reinforce the purpose of the class for me as the quarter continued. Integrative motivation was not at a high level, so a larger, instrumental orientation pervaded, which included a desire to simply experience language learning. While I did not necessarily have a specific love for Korean, these classes would help me become a better teacher.

The next category under course-specific, relevance, had a disproportionately high 26 applicable comments in the diary. I defined relevance as immediate usefulness, and this made me a critical student. As mentioned earlier, I had specific reasons for attending the class beyond language learning. As a teacher of language myself, I often tried to see the purpose of an activity from the teacher's point of view. Since the main presentation of information in the class was from a different methodological trend than the one in which I was trained, I often felt unsatisfied. I

tended to evaluate most instruction and activities by whether or not they were useful for me. I also used the diary as a place to vent feelings; therefore, the majority of comments in this category were negative. Most of the comments in the diary regarded what I did not find useful in the class. Because of the high number of comments, I divided them into distinct categories:

- Class instruction:**
- ♦ The focus of the class was grammar, while I had hoped for a more communicative atmosphere.
  - ♦ Much of the class time was spent copying notes from the board, instead of practicing oral and reading skills.
  - ♦ The lessons were not communicative for students.
  - ♦ The dialogs in class were not utilized to the best of their ability to encourage students to speak.
- Assignments:**
- ♦ I did not understand the purpose of copying words for homework.
  - ♦ The purpose of the final group oral performance was not clearly communicated.
  - ♦ I did not appreciate the large amount of memorization of dialogs throughout the quarter.
  - ♦ I did not see homework, in general, as useful.
- Assessment:**
- ♦ I did not understand how the oral dialogs were assessed.
  - ♦ I did not adequately perceive exactly what the quizzes were testing.
  - ♦ I received little feedback about any progress.
- Content of class:**
- ♦ I often questioned the choice of specific vocabulary words.
  - ♦ I questioned the usefulness of a specific video lesson in the way it was presented.

As I admitted earlier, however, I had specific reasons for wanting to experience language learning in a classroom setting. Therefore, I did carefully observe and note methodological issues throughout the quarter.

In the last two categories under the course-specific component, there was only 1 comment for each. For expectancy, which is the perceived likelihood of success, I once mentioned during a lesson that I was too tired that night and a grammar lesson introducing five new grammar points was too much. In that sense, I perceived my likelihood of failure to not understand and remember everything. The other area, satisfaction, only received 1 comment at the end of the class. In the last diary entry I did admit satisfaction with what I had learned in the class. Otherwise, the focus was more on relevancy of learning than on how satisfied I felt.

## B. Teacher-specific

The second consideration is the teacher-specific component. One important factor to consider is an affiliative drive, when students perform to please a teacher. This is an extrinsic motive, but it can be a precursor to intrinsic. Another factor is the teacher's authority type. Different students will react differently if a teacher is either autonomy supporting or controlling. One other factor with regard to the teacher is how well the teacher encourages or motivates the students. A teacher can model behavior for students, or a teacher can give feedback and present a task in such a way that encourages and intensifies the experience.

In the diary, for the affiliative drive category, the 2 related comments were recorded in the first three weeks of the class. It was only at the very beginning that I consciously strove to please the teacher. There was one incident when I specifically wanted to impress the TA because she had volunteered to meet with me for extra help. I also made a specific visit to the teacher during her office hours once at the beginning of the quarter. Since she knew the other students from the previous quarter, I wanted to establish immediate rapport with her.

Before class tonight I visited Li during office hours. I had tried two weeks ago, but she had never shown. I just wanted to touch base with her, really, and see how I was doing and if there was any specific thing I needed to work on to catch up. She was very nice, but we didn't talk much about Korean. We simply chatted for a bit, and I told her why I was taking the class. I guess it was necessary for me to establish some kind of relationship with her, since she already knows the other students in the class. (Jan. 22)

As far as authority type is concerned, there were only 2 comments which came in the first week. The first comment observed how the students enjoyed the teacher.

The teacher, Li, seems very nice. As soon as she walked in the whole class responded, and I could tell that she is well-liked. She seems to have a good rapport with the class. (Jan. 6)

I also, however, misplaced some of my initial frustration at being so far behind in the class.

Some of my frustration at feeling behind and not in the group is focused elsewhere—like at the teacher. During class, as I didn't know what was happening, I found myself thinking "How could she let me into the class second quarter, knowing I would be so behind? How could she let me in at this stage? How dare she advertise this class as a beginning class when it so obviously isn't? How could she not require any prerequisites?" I wanted to place blame for my confusion and lack of comprehension on her. (Jan. 8)

I questioned her decision-making authority because I had initially trusted her judgment that it would be fine to join the class in the second quarter. Even though I had anticipated the difficulty of catching-up to the level of the class, I was still overwhelmed at how far behind I felt. It was

easier for me to question her authority than to take responsibility for my decision to take the class.

Also under the teacher-specific component was the category of socialization, the modeling or encouragement of motivating factors by the teacher. Out of the 3 comments found in the diary, one demonstrated dissatisfaction.

Another thing that frustrates me is that the content of the quiz is often a surprise. Li will hint about what vocabulary will be on the test, and then it isn't. Or else, different vocabulary that we've hardly focused on in class will be on the quiz, and of course I never remember that well. (Jan. 27)

The two activities I did find helpful occurred during grammar explanations. First, the teacher encouraged students to supply the verbs for different examples, so that encouraged us to learn verbs and have them ready to supply. Also, she spent time explaining each grammar point, and I appreciated all the different sentence examples that were used.

### C. Group-specific

The third factor of the language learning situation is the group-specific motivational component. Group dynamics influence students' affects and cognitions. In a classroom setting, group cohesion, the strength of the linking of relationships between members to the group, can be very important to the atmosphere of the class. Students are also affected by the extent to which the class as a whole is pursuing goals of language learning. Classroom goal structures can either be competitive, cooperative, or individualistic. Usually in a classroom there is also a norm and reward system, which concerns extrinsic motives that specify appropriate behaviors for efficient learning.

In the diary, I found no comments applicable to the category of goal-orientedness. For the next category, norm and reward system, there were only 3 comments, which pertained to the group performance at the end of the quarter. There was pressure to be witty and funny with the scripts that were written. For group cohesion, most of the 11 comments occurred within the first three weeks. It was important to me to belong, somehow, and yet at the same time I shied away from integrating into the class. Half of these comments were recorded during the first week, and their focus was on how I felt like an outsider.

The size of the class surprised me when I first walked in. There were about 25 people in the room. I could tell that they had all formed a bond over first quarter, and so I immediately felt like a stranger and definitely not in the group. (Jan. 6)

I felt like much more of an outsider tonight. I think part of it was because it hit me that I don't belong in the same bracket as most of the other students. I'm not Asian at all; I can't relate to any of their experiences as adoptees. There also is an age difference; most of them are undergraduates. I really don't know what is happening in the class at this stage, and they do...so, again, I feel very much like an outsider. (Jan. 8)

Throughout the quarter, as I gathered my own group of friends, I felt I had aligned myself with the "misfits" in the class.

I'm starting to get to know some of the students in the class by now. I sit next to the same women every night. They tend to latch on to each other because they're misfits in the class, too. (How nice of me to say! I know it's a judgment call on my part.) Sara is a high school student whose mother is Korean. Katie is a white woman who is dating a Korean. They, along with myself, aren't in the undergraduate majority of the class that likes to go out and drink beer after class, so it's okay for us to "stick" together. (We need to stick together.) (Jan. 22)

My focus was drawn again to group cohesion at the end of the quarter when everyone had to participate in a group oral performance. During the whole experience of creating the group project, I continued to feel aligned with the unpopular students, even up to the final outcome of our performance. The other groups performed active, funny skits that made effective use of the vocabulary we had covered in class. My group, while trying very hard to be funny, ended up with a complex script which was difficult to memorize.

Then, our group got up. I felt okay about my part. I had the commercials memorized well, and I had made some silly pictures and props, so those were okay...The rest of my group didn't fare well at all, however. Sara blanked out on her lines for quite a while...Two of the people were so incredibly slow in their delivery. Katie tried to be so funny and dramatic, but couldn't remember her words fast enough to be effective. And, as I thought, most people didn't understand enough of what we said to follow...after all the skits, Li stood up and mentioned a few things briefly about each one. As she came to ours, she said how we had the most new vocabulary. I mentally kicked myself for not holding out stronger against the original script that we wrote. The four of us are probably the lowest in the class, and what on earth were we doing trying to use so many new words? We had been trying to be funny, and entertaining, of course, but that goal made us fail more!! I felt like I had been marked, too, as being in the group that is clueless about language learning. (Mar. 5)

The last group-specific motivational component, classroom goal structure, identifies whether or not the class was structured cooperatively or more individually. In the diary, 3 comments discussed the individualistic nature of the class. Pair work, or any communicative activity, was rare.

## Learning Strategies

### 2. What does a language diary reveal about the use of learning strategies by a language learner?

In the diary (see Appendix 2), 86 comments were identified as pertaining to learning strategies. These different strategies were categorized in Oxford's classification of direct and indirect strategies. Following Oxford's categorization, 27 comments related to direct strategies, and 59 comments were related to indirect strategies. I realized as I analyzed my diary, however, that it was not enough just to identify a comment as relating to a learning strategy; there were four possible reasons for mentioning a learning strategy (see Appendix 3):

- a) Utilization: Over the quarter, I made 56 references to learning strategies because I actually tried or used these different tactics.
- b) Acknowledgment: There were 16 references to different strategies that I acknowledged as being options to help me with a particular skill. However, mention of a strategy did not mean that I actually used that strategy in my learning.
- c) Acknowledgment/Rejection: There were 8 comments pertaining to different strategies that I acknowledged, but then rejected either as being inappropriate for the situation, or being inappropriate for my learning style.
- d) Modeling: There were 6 references to learning strategies that the teacher modeled in the classroom.

### Utilized Strategies

It is worth noting the different learning strategies that I utilized the most over the course of the quarter. Of the 56 references to strategies that I used, 39 were references to indirect strategies. I showed a clear preference throughout the diary not only for indirect strategies, but specifically for metacognitive strategies. The category which I mentioned the most was the metacognitive strategy of identifying the purpose of a task. I used this strategy in a number of ways. Most often, my focus was on classroom survival.

Another part of the test was on conjugating verbs. Well, I knew the rules to do this—most of the decisions come from what vowels the verb stem ends in. At this point I can easily recognize vowels, so I conjugated to my heart's content. Did I know any of the verbs I was working with? Not one of them! But, for that part, meaning wasn't necessary. (Jan. 13)

Here, I was using this strategy to help me survive a test at the beginning of the quarter. I identified the purpose of the test question as simply filling out the correct verb forms. Therefore, I did not worry about the fact that I did not actually know the meaning of any of the verbs. For the purpose of the actual test question, meaning was irrelevant. Again, my focus here was on

classroom survival, and therefore I was able to perform well on the first quiz of the quarter, considering I did not understand much Korean yet.

There were also many times when I attempted to use this strategy without successfully identifying the purpose of a task.

After we had gone over the answers, Park asked us to copy each of our mistakes 5 times. I really don't understand the purpose of that. To practice penmanship? To help memorize vocabulary? (Jan. 22)

I categorized this comment as actual utilization of a strategy because I was trying to find the purpose for the activity. Unfortunately, in this particular class I was not always able to understand the methodology behind assignments and approaches to instruction. Some of this frustration became evident in later comments in the diary.

...when we speak the dialogs in class, we get no feedback. So, what's the purpose? How can I improve my speech/pronunciation, etc., if there's no feedback? (Feb. 3)

Last week Li had us practice a little reading selection. However, she "gave" us the reading selection by writing it on the board first, and then we had to copy it down. So, is that legitimate "reading?" "Copying?" (Mar. 3)

I was trying, in both of these situations, to maximize the usefulness of the activity. I wanted the oral dialogs to be more than just a test of memory. I wanted the reading practice to be actual reading practice, not a slow form of copying and translation. However, as the quarter progressed and I often disagreed with certain instructional decisions, I let my frustration color my ability to identify the purpose of certain activities.

Besides the strategy of identifying the purpose of a task, there were two other categories which were represented as utilized strategies almost as frequently. One was another metacognitive strategy. Paying attention to specific forms and concepts was another technique I used to help survive the class.

Tonight in class we had to do our first oral performance...It's so amazing to feel so nervous to stand up in front of the class and recite a few words...I found myself not even once thinking of the meaning. Once I'd memorized it, then I just went with the sound and the flow, simply because I couldn't translate fast enough in my head.  
(Jan. 15)

Paying attention to specific features of the language was a survival strategy for me to do well in the performance of oral dialogs. For my level of Korean, I knew I had to pay attention to the flow of the words I had memorized. If I had worried about the meaning, I would have slowed down

my speech too much, stumbled over words, and received a lower grade. I used this technique in the class to help me focus on what was essential for me, whether it was specific vocabulary words, listening to information on an exam, or blocking out others' speech if I found that they confused me.

The other category close behind identifying the purpose of a task was the affective strategy of listening to your body. I often commented in my journal how aware I was of stress.

I woke up again last night with little Korean characters running through my head. They didn't quite all form words, though. I remember trying so hard to make them correctly fit together, thinking that comprehension would then come, but it never did. I wonder why these dreams? Am I really feeling stressed? The answer, of course, is yes! (Jan. 12)

A coping strategy for dealing with this stress was keeping a language diary. I mentioned this affective strategy a few times. I would use the diary to vent frustration, to acknowledge stress, and also to explore different issues of language learning.

My probing question for this week is: Why do I put off studying? Why is it the last thing I'll sit down and do? Is it simply laziness, or is there more to it? And if there is more to it—what is that? A deep-seated belief still that I'm not good at languages?...I think I need to continue to explore this issue. (Feb. 3)

One other indirect strategy I mentioned a few times was another metacognitive strategy, the setting of goals and objectives.

It shouldn't be too difficult to go through vocabulary words at least once, if not 2 times a day. At work, I've often thought about how I don't give myself lunch breaks. I can start going to the lounge tables, and eating and reviewing. 15 minutes. It doesn't have to be a lot. (Feb. 5)

I often set goals dealing with vocabulary words. I was concerned about my ability to quickly acquire all the vocabulary that other students had learned from the first quarter. Therefore, it is apparent that most of the indirect strategies I used over the ten-week class were aimed at classroom survival, which manifested itself in a concern for keeping up with vocabulary, doing well on quizzes, and maximizing the usefulness of each activity to help me progress.

I often mentioned three direct strategies. Under memory strategies, I mentioned using mechanical techniques the most, specifically flashcards. Under cognitive strategies, I used repeating strategies the most. To learn new vocabulary words and to memorize dialogs, I had to repeat words and phrases many times. One example comes from the end of the quarter, during preparation for my group oral performance.

I have been saying these lines over and over in the car, as I shower, etc., trying to make them feel natural. (Mar. 5)

The third direct strategy I most often mentioned was the compensation strategy of using linguistic clues. I found it very helpful that there were some similarities between Chinese and Korean. I also had a sense of how to guess at the meaning of unknown words on the tests.

### Acknowledged Strategies

Similar to the numbers of strategies that I mentioned using, there also was a high number of indirect strategies that I simply acknowledged in the diary. The strategy that received the most acknowledgment was again the indirect metacognitive strategy of identifying the purpose of a task.

Another thing which frustrates me is that the content of the quiz is often a surprise. Li will hint about what vocabulary will be on the test, and then it isn't. Or else, different vocabulary that we've hardly focused on in class will be on the quiz...Tonight I blew the whole vocabulary section because it came from the crossword puzzle vocabulary...I also had misinterpreted the importance of the vocabulary. (Jan. 27)

I identified this comment as acknowledging the importance of identifying the purpose of a language task. However, in this situation when I prepared for the quiz, I had not adequately used that strategy to prepare for what was to come.

Two other strategies I acknowledged over the course of the quarter were seeking practice opportunities and developing cultural understanding.

She (*the TA*) presented it (*the dialog*) the same way dialogs are always presented... First the class repeats each line after her, and then some volunteers or unlucky called-on people have to go up to the front and read it to the class. However, again, not enough individuals were able to practice it; we never opened it up for expanded answers, etc. (Feb. 12)

As we were meeting, another Korean friend of mine came up to talk and I tried to introduce her to Hyun. But, they didn't know each other and I didn't know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture (or language, for that matter!) They had to feel each other out. I felt quite awkward, and picked up that the two of them did, also. (Jan. 12)

These two examples show how I was aware of different strategies. I desired having more chances to practice spoken Korean, but there were not many opportunities that presented themselves in the class. Also, the second example shows I was aware of the importance of cultural information. At that time, however, I had acquired little.

### Rejected Strategies

The third category of learning strategies was Acknowledgment/Rejection. I rejected a variety of strategies, but even in this section there was more mention of indirect strategies than of direct. There were 2 comments rejecting the use of mnemonic devices to learn new words. There were also 2 comments rejecting the strategy of working with peers. These comments had to do with group work in class. The first comment came after the first night of class, when I had felt snubbed by the people in my group. The other comment came at the end of the quarter as I was working on the group oral performance.

My group met this week to plan more about our presentation. I was reminded that I don't really like working in groups if I don't know the people well. (Feb. 14)

Halfway through the quarter, I rejected using flashcards.

Flashcards get old after a while, and they don't actually help with language use. (Feb. 21)

I also did not always plan ahead to what information or questions might be on the quizzes. Therefore, instead of learning from previous mistakes, I would simply repeat the errors.

Will I ever learn? It seems like on quizzes and activities, I keep getting the same word wrong...Especially after a quiz, if I get something wrong, the least thing I could do is focus on those mistakes and learn from them. But no, I simply go ahead and make the same mistakes over and over. (Feb. 5)

A few other strategies that I rejected were seeking practice opportunities, and asking for clarification or verification.

One weakness of mine, though, is not asking more questions when I don't understand. I've never been much of a question-asker. (Jan. 22)

Another one of my downfalls in situations like these is that I don't like to volunteer. I end up, then, never getting much oral practice. (Feb. 3)

I tended to see rejection of these strategies as dealing more with personality than with the actual learning situation.

### Modeled Strategies

The last category is strategies that were modeled. The teacher actually modeled more direct strategies, while I utilized many more indirect strategies. She modeled using translation to encourage understanding. She also modeled grouping vocabulary in lists, taking notes, setting goals, and cooperating with peers.

## Results of the MBTI

### 3. How do the results of a personality-type inventory compare with the data in a language diary?

Ehrman and Oxford (1990) did a study to look at how the MBTI related to chosen learning strategies for language learning. Two previous studies (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Ehrman, 1988) had demonstrated a clear relationship between MBTI and learning strategies. Psychological type appears to have a strong influence on the way language learners use strategies. According to the MBTI, I have an Introverted Sensing Feeling Judging (ISFJ) type personality. Descriptions that fit this personality type are a concern for accuracy and organization, and a respect for facts. Adjectives used to describe this type of person are: thorough, painstaking, hard-working and patient with particulars. ISFJ types often choose careers that combine careful observation with caring for people; teaching was on the list of recommendations for careers. From Ehrman and Oxford's study (1990) here are generalized results based on their findings for ISFJ personality types:

- **Introverted types** preferred metacognitive strategies.
- **Sensing types** preferred memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and metacognitive strategies; they disliked compensation strategies.
- **Feeling types** preferred social strategies; they disliked cognitive strategies.
- **Judging types** preferred metacognitive and social strategies; disliked compensation strategies.

Over the course of my ten-week class, the strategies I mentioned most were

1. metacognitive – 35 comments
2. social – 15 comments
3. cognitive – 13 comments
4. memory – 11 comments

Three out of the four personality types tended to prefer metacognitive strategies; I commented most on metacognitive strategies. The other most commonly mentioned strategies in the diary were also indicated by Ehrman and Oxford to be preferred by my personality types. The results of this diary study, then, lend credence to Oxford and Ehrman's previous research.

Other characteristics of ISFJ personalities from Ehrman and Oxford's study (1990) matched learning strategies from the diary. Introverted types were found to prefer reading and writing, and they accomplished this more easily alone. They often wanted to know what was coming next in language learning and disliked surprises. Also, they demonstrated low

conversational risk-taking behavior and operated best when they could process material alone, at home or away from others. Two entries from the diary demonstrate these tendencies.

I found a nice, relaxing atmosphere in Starbucks this afternoon. I'm discovering I can't study in my office. There's too much clutter there, and too many people, and too many distractions. Some of my office mates are very chatty, and studying language is one thing I can't do while I'm distracted. (Jan. 13)

Besides needing to study alone, in a quiet place, I also admitted that my personality tended to make me shy away from speaking much in Korean.

Part of my problem with learning a language is my personality!...For one thing, I'm an introvert. That's all there is to it. Put me in a new situation, and I'm shy. My natural tendency is to observe. I want time to see and hear and experience, and then I'll feel more comfortable to act. I don't like going out on a limb in unknown territory...my first instinct is to simply not have anything to say. So, as I learn a language, especially coming in new to an established class, I am just not going to volunteer much. Even when I know it's good for me, and there is absolutely no danger (!) in making mistakes or volunteering information...I often get by without speaking hardly a word of Korean in class. (Feb. 5)

Sensing types had the greatest appreciation of memory strategies, along with high metacognitive strategy use. They preferred carefully sequenced, small, digestible portions of language learning, and liked practical topics. One example of this is a strong reaction I had to learning what I thought were too many grammar points in one class.

I don't know what was going on in class tonight, but it was just too much... Tonight we covered about 5 new grammar points...I couldn't take it all in. What happens, then, is that I get tired half-way through the class and kind of want to give up on concentrating so hard to catch every new thing. I'm not sure why Li planned it this way. (Feb. 26)

I also mentioned my frustration over the lack of practical topics covered in the class. One evening, we studied vocabulary for subway travel in Seoul.

She (the TA) had a map of the Seoul subway lines, with important stops marked. I didn't know enough of the basic vocabulary or expressions, however, to really be able to produce what she wanted us to produce—the asking for and giving directions. Another thing—this vocabulary is all well and good if you're planning to travel in Seoul, but it won't stick in my head because there's not any, any reason at all to use that conversation here in Minneapolis. (Feb. 12)

Feeling types demonstrated concern for social, interpersonal issues. This was evident in my concern for classroom dynamics and whether or not I would fit in to pre-established relationships in the class.

The size of the class surprised me when I first walked in. There were about 25 people in the room. I could tell that they had all formed a bond over first quarter, and so I immediately felt like a stranger and definitely not in the group. When familiar faces walked in, each person was greeted with a type of group hello or acknowledgment. I sat pretty close to the door, because I was a bit shy and didn't know if the class had a predetermined "seating" arrangement from last quarter—for example, if certain people sat next together all the time, etc. I also somehow felt the need to let people around me know that this was my first quarter. As if they could miss. (Jan. 6)

Also, in Ehrman's and Oxford's study (1990), Feeling types displayed a high interest in target language peoples and culture. In a FL setting I did not often have a chance to demonstrate this, but the few times I did interact with an example of authentic Korean culture I really enjoyed the experience. One time in class the TA brought in clips of Korean soap operas.

After the quiz, Park had prepared some video clips as a way to review certain grammar points from the quarter. At first, I was excited and thought this would be a great lesson. Then, however, she didn't use the video well, so it was confusing... What I did enjoy about the video was the look into Korean culture. The shows were incredibly sappy soap opera scenes. I had seen similar productions in China. They really are done differently than TV here, so there was a lot of laughter in the class. I kept hoping that Park understood the laughter somehow, and wasn't hurt or surprised by our reactions. (Mar. 2)

Finally, for the fourth category, Judging types demonstrated need for control and closure. They thought highly of organizing and planning, including a pre-structured syllabus. They also showed a need for achievement and needed goals, objectives and tasks clearly stated. In my diary, there are numerous comments about wanting to know the purpose for an activity.

After we had gone over the answers, Park asked us to copy each of our mistakes 5 times. I really don't understand the purpose of that. To practice penmanship? To help memorize vocabulary? (Jan. 22)

I also spent time writing specific goals to help me study more successfully.

Finally, I feel like I'm starting to get on top of it. I studied Korean everyday this week (OK - 4 days in a row) but it's a start. 4th week into the quarter and its about time I get my act together! But I need to make it a habit, otherwise it won't happen. It shouldn't be too difficult to go through vocabulary words at least once, if not 2 times a day. At work, I've often thought about how I don't give myself lunch breaks. I can start going to the lounge tables, and eating and reviewing. 15 minutes. It doesn't have to be a lot, anything is just better than nothing. (Feb. 15)

It can be seen from these diary excerpts, then, that some of the generalizations regarding ISFJ personality types were evident in the data.

## Results of the SILL

### 4. How do the results of a learning strategies inventory compare with the learning strategies recorded in a language diary?

A month after completing Korean 1012, I took the SILL. My results are as follows, in order of highest average to lowest:

1. Social strategies (3.6 average)
2. Compensating strategies (3.4 average)
3. Memory strategies (3 average)
4. Cognitive strategies (2.9 average)
5. Affective strategies (2.85 average)
6. Metacognitive strategies (2.81 average)

These results are surprising, considering the results of analysis from my diary study. Why, on the SILL, would metacognitive strategies be ranked last, when from the diary study that category had many more utilized strategies than any other category? Of the 59 indirect learning strategies mentioned, 35 were metacognitive.

In looking more closely at the SILL, some of the categories I ranked highly were based more on hypothetical situations than on my actual experience as a student of Korean. For example, under the section related to social strategies, which ranked highest on the SILL, there were many statements about what I would do in certain conversations, such as whether I would ask the speaker to slow down or repeat, whether I would ask for verification that I had communicated meaning, and whether or not I would let people know when I did not understand or needed help. The next highest ranked category, compensation, also had statements pertaining to similar situations. In my diary, I rarely reported conversations I had in Korean, because I rarely had any. Most of my entries focused on the class, with its grammar focus, repetition of dialogs and lack of communicative activities. Therefore, when I ranked these statements on the SILL I was either using my experience with Chinese, which was in an immersion environment, or I was predicting what I thought I would do if such a circumstance happened. Maybe it was what I hoped I would do in such a circumstance.

I also took the SILL a few weeks after my Korean class. When I went to look at the metacognitive section of the SILL to see what the incongruencies were, I was surprised to see how low I had ranked some of the strategies that I had specifically mentioned in my diary, like arranging my physical environment, organizing my notebook, and identifying the purpose of a task. However, I credit this to the specific time when I took the SILL, when I was feeling more

frustrated with my language learning. The benefit of doing a diary study is that it shows a more complete picture of the language learning experience. At the beginning of the quarter, I was more excited about the class, and also had more time. By the time I finished the Korean course, I was not using all the strategies I had once begun. I think this is reflected in the lower ranking I gave to some of the metacognitive strategies on the SILL. I was frustrated at my inability to continue to set goals and follow them by the end of the quarter. Therefore, the SILL only highlights the feelings and the reality of a language learner's perception of herself on the one day that the questionnaire is administered. A diary study, or a longer term approach, is able to show more of a complete picture in regard to what strategies a learner is actually using.

The SILL also had quite a few strategies listed that I utilized, but simply failed to mention in the diary. For example, under different memory strategies, I always visualize the spelling of a new word in my mind. I did not, however, specifically think about this strategy as I took the course. Another strategy I used was meeting regularly with a language partner. Again, I did not mention this much in the diary. This is just a reminder, then, that a language learner might not be specifically aware of using a language strategy. In my diary, I only mentioned strategies that were prominent in my experience. It is by no means a comprehensive listing.

## **Motivation and Learning Strategies**

### **5. In the data from a ten-week diary study, what relationships can be hypothesized regarding motivational factors and choices of learning strategies?**

In the diary there was evidence of identified motivational factors relating to a choice of learning strategies. A total of 23 comments were categorized in both models (see Appendix 4). The difficulty with looking at the relationship between motivational factors and learning strategies is in trying to explore the causality of the relationship. I began by trying to pinpoint if one initially influenced the other. At first, I hypothesized that an initial motivational factor might result in a choice of learning strategies. However, when the two are connected, it seems that the relationship is more interdependent. An illustration of this can be seen in comments identified at the language level of motivation. In the diary, at the language level, the comments in the integrative motivational subsystem were categorized in common with these indirect learning strategies:

- a. the metacognitive strategy of looking for practice opportunities.
- b. the social strategy of cooperating with a proficient user of the new language.

- c. the social strategy of developing cultural understanding.
- d. the social strategy of being aware of other's thoughts and feelings.

As I have mentioned, I usually wrote in my diary about direct experiences with Korean culture. These comments not only were about integrative motivational factors, but they also demonstrated the use of many different strategies. When I attended a Korean student fundraiser, I was looking for practice opportunities. At the same time, I was enjoying the music, food and friendship of Korean culture which also acted as a motivational influence. Whether or not I first decided to go to the fundraiser because I was using a learning strategy to seek practice opportunities, or whether I went because I was initially motivated to learn more about the language and culture is impossible to pinpoint from the data. Instead, it can be seen that one strategy or factor often encouraged another, which in turn encouraged either more motivational factors or choices of learning strategies.

Also at the language level, the instrumental motivational subsystem corresponded to these learning strategies:

- a. the direct, memory strategy of grouping.
- b. the indirect, affective strategy of listening to the body.

In the class, I was very aware of my capacity to appear at the same language level as the other students, regardless of the fact that I had begun ten weeks later than most. These comments were classified as instrumental motivation, since my concern stemmed from external forces such as classmates' approval.

In class the first night, Li simply wrote a list (*of new vocabulary*) on the board. She did introduce the vocabulary according to subject—such as place, or building names. However, I need so much catching up in this area. I can tell that the class already knows a great repertoire of verbs, of which I know none. So, I've started lists in my notebook, hoping that categorizing words can help me learn more easily. I have a list of verbs, place names, question words...(Jan. 10)

This desire to appear successful resulted in my choosing learning strategies to help me remember new vocabulary quickly. I also was aware of the great pressure I placed on myself to quickly catch up to the level of the class.

At the learner level, a need for achievement corresponded to the choice of these direct strategies:

- a. the cognitive strategy of practicing the writing system.
- b. the compensation strategy of using linguistic cues.

My need to achieve had begun to influence my actions even before the first day of class. I had spent time during the university vacation studying the Korean alphabet so that I could at least read and write at the beginning of class.

I was happy that I had at least studied the alphabet so well over Christmas break. I could copy down all the words from the board, and at least understand the system and sound out each word...For me, however, I was a little proud of myself and felt good about the fact that I could copy down from the board. (Jan. 6)

Also, I had to use many strategies during the quizzes since my Korean level was so low at first. This motivated me to use as many strategies as I could to try and achieve as much as I could.

Also at the learning level, under self-confidence, some language use anxiety comments were also categorized in these different strategies:

- a. the direct, cognitive strategy of repeating
- b. the indirect, metacognitive strategy of paying attention
- c. the indirect, affective strategy of listening to the body.

Much of my language use anxiety stemmed from situations where I was expected to perform the language. In preparation for these times, I would often use strategies to guide me through my anxiety. For example, I once had to make a tape for the TA.

This week we also had to record our voices on tape...All we had to do was write 5 sentences and read them on the tape. However, I made sure I had carefully written each sentence and I practiced them a few times before putting my voice on tape. I felt nervous once I started to record and had to do it a few times. (Feb. 3)

I also was aware of class-related anxiety when I had strange dreams involving Korean characters dancing through my head. In this case, the anxiety seemed to result in the use of the affective strategy of listening to my body. Often, writing in the diary was a form of dealing with pressure.

The category that had the most related comments was at the learning situation level, under the course-specific component. The category of relevance had 8 comments that were also identified as the metacognitive learning strategy of identifying the purpose of a language task. I stated earlier that I had interpreted the relevance of a language task to be its immediate usefulness. I wanted the activities and time spent in class to be relevant; therefore I was motivated to search for the purpose of many of the activities.

...Park asked us to copy each of our mistakes 5 times. I really don't understand the purpose of that. To practice penmanship? To help memorize vocabulary? (Jan. 22)

...at the end of class last Thursday Li had some time to kill so she played what she called a “vocabulary” game...Li then would question us if we knew the Korean for each object, and then she would tell us. I had to write like mad to try and remember everything. Then, she would quiz us on some stuff that she’d already mentioned. I just don’t do well in situations like that. For one thing, I can never remember well only by hearing a word once or twice. I really need to write it down. And then when there are 15, 20 new words at once...let’s just say I didn’t keep up!...I kept thinking that these were not the most useful words to know, and then when would I ever need to use them again? (Feb. 14)

These excerpts are examples of comments that were categorized in both models. In my search for the relevance of an activity to help determine its motivational factor, I also was utilizing the learning strategy of identifying its purpose so I could better and more efficiently complete the task.

It can be seen, then, that there is evidence in the diary of a relationship between some motivational factors and learning strategies. However, the data is not clear on the nature of these relationships, or whether one area was more instrumental in initiating a relationship with the other.



## CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Motivation and learning strategies have both been shown to play a role in a FL learning experience as evidenced through a diary case study. Different motivational factors are at work at different levels. Besides an actual interest or need to learn the language itself, students of FL also bring past successes or failures with them to the classroom, along with anxieties and expectations. The classroom itself also provides many situations to motivate students in a number of ways. Motivation also can influence choice and use of learning strategies. Throughout the language experience, learners use and reject a number of strategies, sometimes linked to their own learning style or to the specific task at hand.

### 1. **To what extent does a language learner's diary reflect a range of motivational factors?**

In my language diary, there were comments regarding motivational factors from each different level that Dörnyei specified in his motivational model for FL learning. The number of comments in each of the different levels of the motivational construct support Dörnyei's claim that the language level, learner level, and learning situation level should all be included when looking at motivation. The specific categorization of the different levels allows a clearer picture of how factors are influencing behavior, and which factor has a more prominent role in the language experience. In my experience, I found the learning situation level to have the most prominent role. The high number of comments stemming from the learning situation level reinforce the importance of the actual classroom atmosphere, above and beyond an integrative or instrumental orientation. Many times in a FL setting, the classroom is the only opportunity for language students to come into contact with the target language and culture. Motivational factors for FL students, then, often seem to be circumstantial. Anytime I had direct contact with Koreans or authentic material, I displayed a more integrative interest in the language and culture. Unfortunately, in the case of FL classrooms, these opportunities might not happen enough to encourage students to further explore an integrative drive.

The number of comments in the diary, compared even to the number of learning strategies mentioned, also indicates the important role motivation plays in language learning. The diary cannot be expected, however, to represent all the factors which affected my experience; more were at work over the course of the quarter. Gilbert (1996) noted in her self-study involving diary data that she was also influenced by factors of which she was not specifically aware. In other words, she acknowledged that her diary did not necessarily tell the

truth, but rather her perception of truth. In this sense, too, my diary reports the motivational factors I perceived to be the most important. However, just by the number of comments it is safe to deduce that I was aware of different factors motivating me, and that these factors were clearly important to me. Also, the diary study allowed for a long-term look at motivation. These different motivational factors were not just an issue at the beginning of the quarter. Weeks five, six, and nine had just as many comments with regard to motivation as weeks one, two and three.

**2. What does a language diary reveal about the use of learning strategies by a language learner?**

While my language diary provided an opportunity to explore the results of some learning strategies through the ten-week class, it also showed that not all strategies mentioned were actually used. Mentioned in the diary were strategies that were acknowledged as being possible choices for certain situations; also, strategies were also recorded as being modeled by the teacher and sometimes as being rejected for a particular situation. In classifying each comment in the diary according to Oxford's taxonomy of learning strategies, it could be seen which specific types of strategies were preferred. In my case, I mentioned using more indirect strategies, specifically metacognitive strategies. Awareness of which strategies are utilized or thought about can help language learners capitalize on their strengths; it can also alert them to other strategies which might be worthwhile for them to try.

**3. How do the results of a personality-type inventory compare with the data in a language diary?**

In this case, the results of the MBTI and the diary were consistent. According to previous research with the MBTI, the strategies mentioned in the diary were consistent with my particular personality type.

**4. How do the results of a learning strategies inventory compare with the learning strategies recorded in a language diary?**

It was found that the results of the SILL were quite different from the data in the language diary. The most prominent learning strategies in the diary, indirect metacognitive strategies, scored the lowest on the SILL. This difference can be attributed in part to the fact that the SILL is not task-based. The data in the diary was all grounded in actual language situations, mainly in classroom survival such as passing tests and memorizing dialogs. The SILL can create hypothetical situations, where a learner might guess at a response, having never actually been in that particular situation.

Another difference between the two research tools is the time-frame involved. The diary study covered ten weeks; it was able to give more of a complete picture through the ups and downs of classroom life than just a one-time questionnaire. The diary study also indicated strategies that were specifically used and those that were merely acknowledged or rejected. The weakness of a diary study, or any method of noting learning strategies, is that certain strategies could easily be overlooked. In this case, then, the SILL provides a more comprehensive coverage of strategies than a diary study might. However, a diary study report provides more information and insights regarding specific strategies.

**5. In the data from a ten-week diary study, what relationships can be hypothesized regarding motivational factors and choices of learning strategies?**

The diary study shows evidence of some relationships between specific motivational factors and learning strategies through comments which were categorized in both models. For example, some comments categorized under the motivational factor of need for achievement also related to direct strategies dealing specifically with the language: practicing the writing system and using linguistic cues. Comments regarding the factor of language use anxiety were also categorized with strategies such as repeating, which helped me practice certain lines several times because I was nervous about performing well. Language use anxiety also showed a relation to an indirect, metacognitive strategy of paying attention; in order to be successful with a certain dialog, I had to pay attention only to specific words and memory cues. However, these apparent relationships are definitely not exclusive. The data is also not clear on the causality or exact nature of these relationships.

### **Limitations to the Study**

As previously mentioned, there are limitations to a diary study. The most important, I feel, is the subjective nature of such a study. Who will ever know what has been omitted in a diary, either from fatigue in writing on the part of the diarist, or from merely overlooking the importance of a particular factor?

Another limitation to the study is the fact that I was not a disinterested participant. Even though I was not specifically focusing my diary on motivational factors or learning strategies at the outset, there were other circumstances that biased my writing. I registered for the class as a language teacher-in-training who wanted to experience being a student again. Therefore, I tended to focus my writing on the methodology of the class. This might account for the large

number of comments found in the course-specific motivational category. Also, since the methodology I experienced was different than what I had expected, I often felt dissatisfied with the class. Therefore, my dissatisfaction could have caused me to write more about the relevance, or irrelevance, of aspects of the class. Was I simply noting my frustration with the class, using the diary as a needed vent? If that was the case, then, my diary entries were still truthful reactions to the class and the comments and research remain valid.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

The results of the analysis serve as an important reminder for FL language teachers regarding the role the classroom plays in encouraging motivation in students. Motivational factors are important considerations to take into account throughout the course of the class. Students do not necessarily enter the course with an integrative drive that carries them through, especially in a FL setting. Instead, it is important for FL teachers to realize that students need to be motivated week by week.

Another responsibility that FL teachers have is to create as many authentic situations as possible. Every time I experienced more of an authentic situation with Korean materials or people, an integrative curiosity was raised. Therefore, FL teachers need to be aware of how difficult it may be for students to find authentic language use situations, and to capitalize on time in the classroom. Using a variety of activities can both create interest and allow for students to be successful through use of different types of learning strategies. Another option that FL teachers have is to help students be more aware of the language learning process. Depending on the situation, a FL teacher could encourage students to explore language learning issues in their own language. For example, FL students could be encouraged to keep their own language diary. The process does not need to be as rigorous as a researcher's, but it would give students an opportunity to reflect on their own experience and their reactions to the language and culture. As mentioned earlier, a language diary can serve as a vent for frustration; it could also motivate students to continue studying if they are specifically made aware of their struggles and successes through the diary. A language diary can also focus on specific issues; a FL teacher could alert students to different learning strategies used in class and encourage them to continue the discovery process of what specific strategies they use and how successful each strategy is.

Regarding the SILL, I would like to mention that FL teachers need to be careful in interpreting results if they administer such a questionnaire. The results do not necessarily reflect what strategies students are actually using in the classroom, as they will use strategies that fir

specific classroom activities. However, the SILL could be used to raise awareness of the utilization of learning strategies for students. It also can point out other strategy options for students who may be limiting themselves to certain strategies.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Since the actual FL classroom is an important motivational factor in the language learning process, one possible next step would be to analyze how motivation could be fostered and encouraged in the classroom. Action research is one tool for examining how FL teachers try different methods to provide authentic language use situations in their classes and how FL teachers motivate students to learn. What are some ways FL teachers actually motivate students and what are some possible methods to further help FL teachers motivate students?

This study also raises interesting questions about finding clearer links between motivational factors and specific choices of learning strategies. Some possibilities have been noted, but more work in that area is needed. Also, this study looked only at learning strategies used in a FL setting. It would be interesting to analyze any identifiable differences between strategies used in a FL setting in comparison to a second language or immersion setting.

Another question raised is the differences found between the diary results, the SILL, and the MBTI results. The SILL is a quick inventory for possible strategy preference; however, it is not task-based. It would be helpful to have a more task-based inventory that could be easily used in FL classrooms to help students identify strategies used or strategy options. I know there is an ongoing search for clear, less subjective language learning assessments. It would be interesting to do more comparisons between the results of the SILL and actual learning strategies used and preferred over time by language learners.

### **Conclusions**

There are limitations to diary studies in that they provide very subjective data. However, the issue of motivation itself is subjective. How can people ever fully know all the reasons for specific actions? Therefore, it is important to learn as much as possible about what factors or strategies are specifically noted by a language learner. A language diary is a record of what is most meaningful to a language learner, and there is importance in such information. Even with probable omissions of motivational factors or learning strategies, enough data is still included in a diary study to highlight what is happening and affecting a particular language learning experience. Also, diary studies provide more of a long-term picture of language learning. Other

research tools for motivation and strategies are often cross-sectional and do not address issues about what happens over time.

Motivation is a language learning factor which acts as a driving force throughout the entire process, not simply at the beginning of the experience. In FL settings, learners need motivational factors to persevere in their endeavors. Also, the actual language classroom is a vital source of motivational factors. With a lack of authentic language use situations, integrative motives do not always flourish in FL settings. Even with other factors affecting motivation besides the learning situation, the classroom itself plays a vital role in arousing and sustaining interest in language learning.

Regarding learning strategies, it is necessary to note that mention of a strategy in a language diary does not automatically mean utilization of that strategy. Instead, a diary can show evidence of the exploration, explanation and even possible rejection of different learning strategies. Individual learners often have specific strategies with which they feel more comfortable and use more often. Analysis of a language diary can provide awareness for a learner about what strategy type is used most and which is used least. Also, there are specific links between motivational factors affecting a specific choice for learning strategies, but more research is needed to help highlight the causal nature of this relationship.

This study is another step in the process of specifying motivational factors for learners in a FL setting. The importance of the learning situation level in Dörnyei's model emphasizes how influential the classroom is in providing motivational factors for learners. Utilization of learning strategies are also affected by motivation. The FL classroom can provide an opportunity for learners to explore which strategies they use and which they find most successful. I trust, as research in these areas continues, that classroom methodology will incorporate results so as to maximize the time, experience, and success of FL learners.

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## Appendix 1. Categorization of Comments Regarding Motivational Factors

### I. Language Level

#### a) Integrative Motivational Subsystem

- ♦ Jan. 10 I think if I ever went to Korea I would make many taboo errors in addressing people, older, my age, younger. And how do you establish the relationship when you can use the intimate form? Especially if I were to go there, as an outsider? I wonder how forgiving Koreans would be to an outsider, if it's obvious I'm at least making an attempt to speak their language?
- ♦ Jan. 12 Already I've met some new Korean people, so let me take it for what it's worth. (later) As we were meeting, another Korean friend of mine came up to talk and I tried to introduce her to Hyun. But, they didn't know each other and I didn't know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture (or language, for that matter!) They had to feel each other out. I felt quite awkward, and picked up that the two of them did, also. Is this a typical way that Koreans feel each other out? How can they know how to address the other in the hierarchy of things when they first meet? After they meet, how long does it take to establish who is older, younger, "higher," "lower," etc.?
- ♦ Jan. 24 I'll need to learn restaurant vocabulary and go back and try it again! (wanting to fit in the culture of the Korean restaurant)
- ♦ Jan. 31 A cultural note - it seems like Koreans are similar to Chinese in some ways, in the asking of favors! I had a Korean woman call me the other night...(I was trying to figure out how to properly deal with the asking of favors and requests from Koreans - relying on my experience in China)
- ♦ Feb. 5 The hard part about learning a foreign language in the USA is simply making it a part of your life.
- ♦ Feb. 21 Last Saturday I went to "Taste of Korea." It was a fund-raiser for Korean students... But, for me, the funny part of the afternoon was when Sherry came up as I was eating and whispered something in Korean in my ear. My first reaction was to freeze. I understood the verb "to eat" but didn't understand anything else. And I wanted to impress her! But it didn't work. Instead, all I felt was awkward.
- ♦ Mar. 3 What I did enjoy about the video was the look into Korean culture. The shows were incredibly sappy soap opera scenes...

#### b) Instrumental Motivational Subsystem

- ♦ Jan. 8 First of all, I've been thinking about my actual motivation for studying this language. After initially being so sold on the idea of going to Korea, now I just don't know, and there are times when I wonder why I didn't try harder to get into Chinese classes. Why am I going to put so much effort into this if I have no clue about the future?...
- ♦ Jan. 10 ...I need so much catching up in this area. I can tell that the class already knows a great repertoire of verbs, of which I know none. So, I've started...( desire seems to be to catch up because of the class, not because of internal motivation)
- ♦ Jan. 12 Up to now I've been considering it more of a chore. Probably because I'm thinking about a plan B, and that takes away some of the fun. I need to keep the ultimate end goal in mind, though - to just experience learning a language. Simply that, with all it's intricacies...
- ♦ Jan. 13 I'm pretty sure that I registered for this class pass or fail, so the little grades don't really matter much to me. I'm in this just to see what happens.

♦ Jan. 19 I think I sometimes expect that I need to sit down and STUDY, when actually 20 minutes of review is better, a lot better, than nothing. This might tie in to the pressure that I put on myself with “catching up.”

## II. Learner Level

### a) Need for achievement

- ♦ Jan. 6 I was happy that I had at least studied the alphabet so well over Christmas break. I could copy down all the words from the board, and at least understand the system...
- ♦ Jan. 6 I was a little proud of myself and felt good about the fact that I could copy things down from the board.
- ♦ Jan. 8 I feel like identity in this class is based on language ability. At this point, I really don't have much ability, so in that sense I feel like a non-entity. I'm a deadweight - trying to listen and copy down as much as I can, but not wanting or knowing how to respond or answer to anything.
- ♦ Jan. 13 I was writing a second quarter quiz. The really amusing thing is that I felt I did okay, for quite a number of reasons.
- ♦ Jan. 13 So, overall, tonight I was actually pretty happy with myself, for at least appearing like I have it together.
- ♦ Jan. 20 I hadn't learned the new vocabulary that I had wanted to. So, I ended up feeling quite stupid...
- ♦ Jan. 22 I got a better grade on my second quiz than on my first, even after not studying last weekend.
- ♦ Mar. 3 I wonder if I can stay on top of it enough to really feel ready for that (the final). I haven't done incredibly well on the quizzes. I'm glad the pressure is off for me to not worry about A-F grades.

### b) Self Confidence

#### 1. Language Use Anxiety

- ♦ Jan. 8 I felt incredibly self-conscious to even say a one-syllable word.
- ♦ Jan. 10 ...it was quite unsettling to wake up feeling so stressed like that. I need to relax a little!
- ♦ Jan. 12 I wonder why these dreams? Am I really feeling stressed?
- ♦ Jan. 13 I really do need to learn to relax about this whole process. Crazy dreams are a sign of the pressure that I'm putting on myself. And it's unnecessary pressure.
- ♦ Jan. 15 It's so amazing to feel so nervous to stand up in front of the class and recite a few words. And I usually stand up in front of classes! But, this was different. I found myself not even once thinking of the meaning...
- ♦ Feb. 3 I felt nervous once I started to record and had to do it a few times.
- ♦ Feb. 10 It does feel strange to hear those strange sounds come out of my mouth.
- ♦ Feb. 21 It seems like such an effort. I don't know where to begin. I don't know how to say what I want to say! (context of writing)
- ♦ Mar 3 I am still a little nervous, though, for the final exam.
- ♦ Mar 5 Talk about feeling nervous. (context of group performance)

#### 2. Perceived L2 Competence

- ♦ Jan. 12 I feel like I need to catch up fast, and it's not happening. I lack so much vocabulary. I've been studying the forms and styles and I ...

- ♦ Jan. 13 I knew the rules to do this ...so I conjugated to my hearts content. Did I know any of the verbs I was working with? Not one of them! But, for that part, meaning wasn't necessary.
- ♦ Feb. 3 ...what frustrates me is that I can get by with it. True, I felt like I bombed last week's quiz, but I didn't really care!
- ♦ Feb. 7 I'm also starting to realize how slow my reading ability is. If we are going over something in class, I can kind of follow, but if I would have to read out loud...
- ♦ Mar. 10 Either I know this stuff by now or I don't, and what I need to do before the final is review and remind myself of what I do know.
- ♦ Mar. 13 ...at the end of the test...reading section...I just didn't know any of this vocabulary.

### 3. Causal Attributions

- ♦ Jan. 13 ...throughout my entire educational career I've always "survived" classes well, regardless of whether I felt like I understood the material well. I'm reminded of my French experience - getting A's in each class, but never feeling like I learned French. Following rules is something I can do quite well!...
- ♦ Jan. 15 Luckily, I've always been able to memorize things well short-term.
- ♦ Jan. 20 Why did I second guess myself? I remember doing this in Phonetics class, too, with the dictations. If I just trusted my first instinct, then many times it was okay.
- ♦ Jan. 29 Of course, I haven't been very consistent with that (vocabulary notebook) I never seem to change, do I?
- ♦ Feb. 3 I'm so good at putting off studying, and that really frustrates me. This is how it went for Chinese, and now Korean.
- ♦ Feb. 3 Why do I put off studying? Why is it the last thing I'll sit down to do? Is it simply laziness, or is there more to it? And if there is more to it - what is it about?... (list many doubts)
- ♦ Feb. 5 Part of my problem with learning a language is my personality! Fancy that! I've thought this before, especially with my experience in China...
- ♦ Feb. 10 My dad always used to tell me I was good at studying and had good study habits. But, thinking about it, I never read all I had to read in college...

### 4. Self Efficacy

- ♦ Jan. 19 When we started singing, the melody was pretty simple, but again, whenever she tried to speed us up, my mouth simply wouldn't keep up. I tried, but ended up butchering words, having entirely wrong vowels come out of my mouth...so, there were times that I just ended up humming the melody.
- ♦ Jan. 24 This is when I felt a great surge of excitement, and probably a little desire to show off, and insisted that they pass me the bill so I could read it. (at a restaurant)
- ♦ Feb. 19 For not preparing for the quiz, for feeling like I was doing so lousy in the class, for not feeling well, for getting so busy this quarter that I couldn't stay on top of things, for not reviewing my Korean every day...Such feelings of failure.
- ♦ Mar. 3 I have trouble getting Korean out of my mouth. Sometimes in class we have to repeat the teacher, and I just can't read fast enough and make my mouth do what I want it to...So I often give up and not say certain words.

### III. Learning Situation Level

#### a) Course-specific Motivational Components

##### 1. Interest

- ♦ Jan. 19 I was excited to think about learning a song, because I love to sing. I also have taught my students songs, so I thought this would be a good time to experience!
- ♦ Jan. 29 ...we did a lesson looking at family vocabulary. I had to laugh as we did this, because I've done this with my own students many times.
- ♦ Feb. 3 This week we also had to record our voices on tape. This cracked me up, because I've made students do this themselves.
- ♦ Feb. 12 Park tried to make her lesson communicative tonight... nice cultural information... (Valentine's Day dialog)
- ♦ Feb. 12 Park prepared this nice activity about traveling on the subway.
- ♦ Mar. 3 At first, I was excited...(for the video)

##### 2. Relevance

- ♦ Jan. 15 And the purpose of it? (context of the first oral performance)
- ♦ Jan. 15 Each pair had to stand in front of the class to recite the dialog. That made it somehow even more formal: I'm not sure of the exact purpose of making each student stand in the front of the classroom. I'm not sure how we were graded, either. On memory?...
- ♦ Jan. 20 I'm finding that we have to do a lot of copying from the board in this class. I don't really like it, because it takes a lot of time. I didn't understand why the clues couldn't simply have been added to the paper. So instead of spending time in class trying to work on this...
- ♦ Jan. 22 Park asked us to copy each of our mistakes 5 times. I really don't understand the purpose of that. To practice penmanship? To help memorize vocabulary? There really hasn't been a push in class to learn new vocabulary.
- ♦ Jan. 27 Park often writes by hand the whole quiz on the blackboard...(about wasting time going over the quiz - haven't figured out what quizzes are testing...no communicative activities)
- ♦ Jan. 27 ...we aren't practicing each (grammar) point enough. We do a few exercises, but not enough for each thing to really stick in my head.
- ♦ Jan. 29 However, there was no real practice besides filling in Park's family tree. We didn't even have to make a family tree for ourselves, which would have personalized it nicely for everyone...
- ♦ Jan. 29 So far, this class hasn't been very communicative. Am I really surprised by this? No! Just a little disappointed.
- ♦ Feb. 3 The teaching methodology frustrates me sometimes. For example, this last week we had to memorize two more dialogs...my time is spent memorizing. I admit this does help a little with vocabulary, but I really should be spending more time learning other stuff, like practicing grammar, memorizing verbs...
- ♦ Feb. 3 One example of getting no feedback happened in class tonight...that makes me question again the purpose of the activity. It is only to give context to number practice? Is it simply to fill up time in class?
- ♦ Feb. 3 It was good practice. (context of recording voice on tape)
- ♦ Feb. 10 Which means a lot of time for what? As if it's important to learn how to say "home pregnancy kit" in another language. (context of group performance)
- ♦ Feb. 10 Cut out the fun, let's just learn! Any of this group work is wasted time!
- ♦ Feb. 10 I could study more USEFUL stuff if I didn't have to do these annoying homework assignments. What are the purpose of the assignments? Well, some of them are beneficial.
- ♦ Feb. 10 That kind of homework is good. (tape - listening and speaking)

- ♦ Feb. 10 But, to copy answers to a crossword puzzle 5 times doesn't really make sense to me. What are they checking?
- ♦ Feb. 12 ...not enough individuals were able to practice it; we never opened it up for expanded answers, etc. (Valentine's Day dialog)
- ♦ Feb. 12 It won't stick in my head because there's not any, any reason at all to use that conversation here in Minneapolis. (context of subway vocabulary)
- ♦ Feb. 14 I kept thinking that these were not the most useful words to know, and that when would I ever need to use them again? Lipstick??? For crying out loud! (vocabulary game with Li)
- ♦ Feb. 24 I thought it a complete waste of time. (context of comparing Korean translations for group performance)
- ♦ Feb. 24 ...what is the stupid purpose of these group projects anyway? It sure isn't helping me learn Korean...This is not helping at all.
- ♦ Feb. 26 It was just too much. I couldn't take it all in. (context of 5 new grammar points)
- ♦ Mar. 2 Aaargh! It takes a lot of time, for what? I'm memorizing a commercial for toothpaste. (context of group performance)
- ♦ Mar. 3 However, she "gave" us the reading selection by writing it on the board first, and then we had to copy it down. So, is that legitimate "reading?" "Copying?"
- ♦ Mar. 3 Then, however, she didn't use the video well, so it was confusing.
- ♦ Mar. 10 The questions that will be asked are some new ones for me, which is a surprise. I think these are all things that they covered fall quarter, but...I'm not sure about some of this vocabulary...This quarter we haven't focused at all on any of this "practical" conversation stuff. (context of final exam)
- ♦ Mar. 10 We went through a list of 20 sentences Li had prepared...That was helpful.

### 3. Expectancy

- ♦ Feb. 26 ...I get tired half-way through the class and kind of want to give up on concentrating so hard to catch every new thing. (context of 5 new grammar points )

### 4. Satisfaction

- ♦ Mar. 13 And at the end of that time, even though I was incredibly worn out, I really did feel like I had accomplished something this quarter.

## b)Teacher-Specific Motivational Components

### 1. Affiliative Drive

- ♦ Jan. 20 Last week Park was so good at helping me along, and she did again, but I really felt bad that I couldn't lead the conversation more. After all she had offered to meet me because she wanted to help ME.
- ♦ Jan. 22 Before class tonight I visited Li during office hours. I had tried two weeks ago, but she had never shown. I just wanted to touch base with her, really, and see how I was doing and if there was any specific thing I needed to work on to catch up.

### 2. Authority Type

- ♦ Jan. 6 The teacher, Li, seems very nice. As soon as she walked in the whole class responded, and I could tell that she is well liked. She seems to have a good rapport with the class.
- ♦ Jan. 8 Some of my frustration at feeling behind and not in the group is focused elsewhere - like at the teacher. During class.. I found myself thinking... "How could she let me into the class second quarter, knowing I would be so behind? How could she let me in at this stage?..."

### 3. Socialization of Motivation

- ♦ Jan. 10 ...for grammar points, Li often has students supply the verbs to be conjugated. Which is nice, because it interests students more, and at this point that's about all that is actually spoken in Korean by the students.
- ♦ Jan. 27 Another thing which frustrates me is that the content of the quiz is often a surprise. Li will hint about what vocabulary will be on the test, and then it isn't. Or else, different vocabulary that we've hardly focused on in class will be on the quiz, and of course I never remember that well.
- ♦ Feb. 26 Usually, the best part of the lesson is the time spent on examples. However, these examples are usually all written examples, not spoken practice. I can tell that the notes she uses to write down all the new points come from years of teaching this class.

### c) Group-Specific Motivational Components

#### 1. Norm and Reward System

- ♦ Feb. 10 And there's some unspoken pressure to be witty and funny and entertaining. (context of group performance)
- ♦ Feb. 14 Again, the emphasis for the "veterans" of the class was that this whole thing had to be witty and funny.
- ♦ Mar. 5 And then, I could start to see the "competition" begin. Many groups had props, and elaborate costumes, etc. We were going to have a show.

#### 2. Group Cohesion

- ♦ Jan. 6 I could tell that they had all formed a bond over first quarter, and so I immediately felt like a stranger and definitely not in the group.
- ♦ Jan. 6 I also somehow felt the need to let people around me know that this was my first quarter.
- ♦ Jan. 6 Because we were all new, we sat next to each other and had our own conversation, since it was so obvious that we weren't known by the others.
- ♦ Jan. 8 I felt like much more of an outsider tonight. I think part of it was because it hit me that I don't belong in the same bracket as most of the other students. I'm not Asian at all; I can't relate to any of their experiences as adoptees. There also is an age difference; most of them are undergraduates. I really don't know what is happening in the class at this stage, and they do...so, again, I feel very much like an outsider.
- ♦ Jan. 10 I need so much catching up in this area. I can tell that the class already knows a great repertoire of verbs... (also categorized under instrumental motivational subsystem)
- ♦ Jan. 15 When I had to stand up in front of everyone, it was a weird statement for me. I felt like I was somehow officially announcing my presence in the class. At the same time I was scared to expose my poor pronunciation and possibly a lack of knowledge. (context of first oral performance)
- ♦ Jan. 22 I'm starting to get to know some of the students in the class by now. I sit next to the same women every night. They tend to latch on to each other because they're misfits in the class, too...
- ♦ Jan. 27 So many people are griping a little - some say that the pace is slow because we are reviewing and really focusing on grammar. Others just don't like studying grammar. They say it confuses them. I am glad we are focusing on grammar...I can keep up.
- ♦ Mar. 5 I just really felt like I was in the "misfit" group at that moment.
- ♦ Mar. 5 I felt like I had been marked, too, as being in the group that is clueless about language learning.

♦ Mar. 5 For me, it was a little redemptive after what I thought was a huge bomb of a skit. I was able to stay in the game till close to the end rounds.

### **3. Classroom Goal Structure**

♦ Jan. 8 No one in my group tried to introduce themselves - they all seemed to know each other. I didn't initiate much because I felt so out of my league. So, I felt like no one really cared whether I was there or not, and I knew that I simply couldn't help them.

♦ Jan. 10 She had a group competition, which I thought was interesting. Groups had to translate sentences into Korean. Then, each group wrote their answers on the board, and then a different representative from each group graded another group's work.

♦ Feb. 5 Tonight we started talking about a group project that will have to be performed next month sometime...pressure to be funny...decided on soap opera and commercials.



## Appendix 2. Categorization of Comments Regarding Learning Strategies

### Direct Strategies - I. Memory Strategies

#### A. 1. Grouping

♦ In class the first night, Li simply wrote a list (of vocabulary) on the board. She did introduce the vocabulary according to subject - such as place, or building names. 1-10 *Modeling*

♦ So, I've started lists in my notebook, hoping that categorizing words can help me learn more easily. I have a list of verbs, place names, questions words (very small at this point.) 1-10

*Utilization*

#### A. 3. Placing new words into a context

♦ Should I start memorizing lists of vocabulary words? My problem with this is that the words don't stick in my head without any kind of context. 1-6 *Acknowledgment*

#### B. 4. Representing sounds in memory

♦ The Korean sounds are still so different and foreign to me. I can try to come up with some "sounds like" mnemonic devices, but that bogs me down, too. There are too many words to learn. 1-6 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*

♦...I didn't spend a lot of time learning new words. Partly because they didn't stick in my head...No way, unless I used an incredible amount of mnemonic devices, of remembering the order of sounds. 1-10 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*

#### C. 1. Structured reviewing

♦ I've started a little vocabulary notebook...I simply add new words as they come up, Korean on one side of the page, English on the other, and then I can easily review. 1-29 *Utilization*

♦ Without constant review I forget so much. 2-21 *Acknowledgment*

#### D. 2. Using mechanical techniques

♦ For the letters and numbers and days of the week, etc., I'll make flashcards. They help me review, at least. 1-6 *Utilization*

♦ I've decided it's not a good thing to go through flashcards right before I go to bed. 1-10 *Utilization*

♦ Also, to help me study I want to start making flashcards...So far I've made flashcards with numbers, and days of the week. 1-10 *Utilization*

♦ Flashcards get old after awhile, and they don't actually help with language use. 2-21 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*

### II. Cognitive Strategies

#### A. 1. Repeating

♦ I guess the only way to learn that (numbers) is by repetition. 1-6 *Utilization*

♦ I figure repetition is a good thing. 1-10 *Acknowledgment*

- ♦ I made sure I had carefully written each sentence and I practiced them a few times before putting my voice on tape. 2-3 *Utilization*
- ♦ I have been saying these lines over and over in the car, as I shower, etc., trying to make them feel natural. 3-5 *Utilization*

### **A. 2. Formally practicing with sounds and writing systems**

- ♦ I was happy that I had at least studied the alphabet so well over Christmas break. I could copy down all the words from the board, and at least understand the system and sound out each word, if I was given time. 1-6 *Utilization*

### **A. 3. Recognizing and using formulas and patterns**

- ♦ I also tried to write words and memorize some key phrases. 1-10 *Utilization*

### **C. 1. Reasoning deductively**

- ♦ If I'm striving to look for patterns in the language it is extremely unsatisfying to hear that it just should be this way. Give me rules...give me exceptions to the rules...but most of all I want some kind of explanation. 2-3 *Utilization*

### **C. 3. Analyzing contrastively**

- ♦ Which reminds me that I haven't caught on to the formation of questions yet. I've been trying to see if there is a question marker or not, or where the question word goes. 1-10 *Utilization*

### **C. 4. Translating**

- ♦ She (Li) had a group competition, which I thought was interesting. Groups had to translate sentences into Korean. 1-10 *Modeling*
- ♦ ...Korean on one side of the page, English on the other, and then I can easily review. Of course, with this method, I can choose which way I want to translate. Usually, though, I choose the easier way of going from Korean to English. 1-29 *Utilization*
- ♦ In class, then, she (Li) orally explained the reading and we all worked together to translate it. 3-3 *Modeling*

### **D. 1. Taking notes**

- ♦ I had to write like mad to try and remember everything. 2-14 *Utilization*
- ♦ She (Li) simply stops, turns her back to us, and starts writing. We're expected to copy it all down, and to learn it that way. 2-26 *Modeling*

## **III. Compensation Strategies**

### **A. 1. Using linguistic clues**

- ♦ ...I felt I did okay (*on the first quiz*)...I could get by with guessing a lot...The Korean word for library sounds a lot like the Chinese word. When I first realized that, I found it quite amusing. 1-13 *Utilization*
- ♦ It took me awhile to go through the dialog and understand what it all meant. I'm really slow using the dictionary...my first approach was to first guess what the English word was and to go

from there. That was easier for me this time because I could guess the general drift of the conversation. 1-15 *Utilization*

♦ ...hearing/translating only word, and having a sense to guess from there. So far that's worked well on quizzes. 1-22 *Utilization*

## **Indirect Strategies - I. Metacognitive**

### **A. 2. Paying attention -**

♦ I've been studying the forms and styles and I understand the basic concepts, but hardly have any verbs yet in my vocabulary. 1-12 *Utilization*

♦ It's so amazing to feel so nervous to stand up in front of the class and recite a few words...I found myself not even once thinking of the meaning. Once I'd memorized it, then I just went with the sound and the flow...1-15 *Utilization*

♦ Before "performing" the dialogs, we practiced them a few times as a class, and then listened to each pair perform. That was not a good thing. I had memorized according to my speed, intonation, and pronunciation. Hearing other people speak didn't help me at all. 1-15

#### *Utilization*

♦ I can only handle so much new information at once, so I'm not going to worry about her lines at all. It's enough simply for me to think about mine! 3-2 *Utilization*

♦ I know the gist, but it's just too much. 3-5 *Utilization*

♦ I kept scribbling down little reminders about certain vocabulary words to review. 3-10

#### *Utilization*

♦ Once I misunderstood one question, it was a challenge to really focus my attention right away and think about the next question. 3-13 *Acknowledgment*

### **B. 1. Finding out about language learning**

♦ ...knowing something about grammar and language structure - I'm actually admitting here that taking Linguistic Analysis was a good thing in this case. 1-22 *Utilization*

### **B. 2. Organizing**

♦ I found a nice relaxing atmosphere in Starbucks this afternoon. I'm discovering I can't study in my office. There's too much clutter there, and too many people, and too many distractions... But, a nice cup of tea, some fun jazz music, and I enjoyed studying. 1-13 *Utilization*

### **B. 3. Setting goals and objectives**

♦ I spoke with Li during break and she said I should try to work my way through the packet from last quarter, maybe one lesson every day. 1-6 *Modeling*

♦ After going through that exercise in class I think I'll make a set (flashcards) of question words, and I hope to start a list of verbs. 1-10 *Utilization*

♦ My goal is to whip through these words (*vocabulary notebook*) once a day. 1-29 *Utilization*

♦ It shouldn't be too difficult to go through vocabulary words at least once, if not 2 times a day...I can start going to the lounge tables, and eating and reviewing. 15 minutes. It doesn't have to be a lot. 2-5 *Utilization*

♦ I'm also starting to realize how slow my reading ability is. We hardly do any reading practice...I just keep on with this notion, however, that if I could just practice reading more, then it would come more easily. 2-5 *Acknowledgment*

### **B. 4. Identifying the purpose of a language task**

- ◆ Another part of the test was on conjugating verbs. Well, I knew the rules to do this...so I conjugated to my heart's content. Did I know any of the verbs I was working with? Not one of them! But, for that part, meaning wasn't necessary. 1-13 *Utilization*
- ◆ Being able to remember and follow rules for verb endings (not necessarily needing to know the meanings). This must be an ability to focus on form, not meaning, which is a fine way to survive in a class that also focuses on form. 1-22 *Utilization*
- ◆ After we had gone over the answers, Park asked us to copy each of our mistakes 5 times. I really don't understand the purpose of that. To practice penmanship? To help memorize vocabulary? 1-22 *Utilization*
- ◆ Another thing which frustrates me is that the content of the quiz is often a surprise. Li will hint about what vocabulary will be on the test, and then it isn't. Or else, different vocabulary that we've hardly focused on in class will be on the quiz...Tonight I blew the whole vocabulary section because it came from the crossword puzzle vocabulary...I also had misinterpreted the importance of the vocabulary...1-27 *Acknowledgment*
- ◆ I still haven't really figured what the quizzes are actually testing. 1-27 *Utilization*
- ◆ Also, when we speak the dialogs in class, we get no feedback. So, what's the purpose? How can I improve my speech/pronunciation, etc., if there's no feedback? 2-3 *Utilization*
- ◆ But, to copy answers to a crossword puzzle 5 times doesn't really make sense to me. What are they checking? Spelling? Handwriting? 2-10 *Utilization*
- ◆ Another thing - this vocabulary is all well and good if you're planning to travel in Seoul, but it won't stick in my head because there's not any, any reason at all to use that conversation here in Minneapolis. 2-12 *Acknowledgment*
- ◆ But, another thing that didn't really help was my attitude! I kept thinking that these were not the most useful words to know, and that when would I ever need to use them again. 2-14 *Acknowledgment*
- ◆ That's when I begin to tune out, get angry inside, and keep asking myself what is the stupid purpose of these group projects anyway? 2-24 *Utilization*
- ◆ Last week Li had us practice a little reading section. However, she "gave" us the reading selection by writing it on the board first, and then we had to copy it down. So, is that legitimate "reading?" "Copying?" 3-3 *Utilization*
- ◆ ...she (Park) didn't use the video well, so it was confusing. She was trying to help, but her explanations were laborious. 3-3 *Acknowledgment*

### **B. 5. Planning for a language task**

- ◆ Will I ever learn? It seems like on quizzes and activities, I keep getting the same word wrong...Especially after a quiz, if I get something wrong, the least thing I could do is focus on those mistakes and learn from them. But no, I simply go ahead and make the same mistakes over and over. 2-5 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*
- ◆ I think this surprises me because this whole quarter we haven't focused at all on any of this "practical" conversation stuff. So, I'll have to find a Korean friend to help me a little with this. 3-10 *Utilization*

### **B. 6. Seeking practice opportunities**

- ♦ Another one of my downfalls in situations like these is that I don't like to volunteer. I end up, then, never getting much oral practice in the class. 2-3 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*
- ♦ I should ask for some Korean music tapes to borrow. The hard part about learning a foreign language in the USA is simply making it a part of your life. 2-5 *Utilization*
- ♦ We hardly do any reading practice. I have no clue where I could get some reading materials that would be at my level...My vocabulary is so limited that I don't even know what I would be capable of comprehending. 2-7 *Acknowledgment*
- ♦ She (Park) presented it the same way dialogs are always presented, though. First, the class repeats each line after her, and then some volunteers or unlucky called-on people have to go up to the front and read it to the class. However, again, not enough individuals were able to practice it; we never opened it up for expanded answers, etc. 2-12 *Acknowledgment*
- ♦ Last Saturday I went to "Taste of Korea."...That's the main reason I went (to hear Korean spoken) 2-21 *Utilization*

### C. 1. Self-monitoring

- ♦ I understood my mistake, then, and so answered correctly. Then, when I went back into the classroom, I had to go back to my written answer and change that. So, my little mistake that was caught in the interview helped me get a written answer correct! 3-13 *Utilization*

### C. 2. Self-evaluating

- ♦ My skill was simply knowing what it took to pass each class with an A, and that's what I did. 2-10 *Utilization*

## II. Affective Strategies

### C. 1. Listening to your body

- ♦ I also have a bad cold, so it was inevitable for me to wake up sooner or later. But, it was quite unsettling to wake up feeling so stressed like that. I need to relax a little! 1-10 *Utilization*
- ♦ I woke up again last night with little Korean characters running through my head. They didn't quite all form words, though...Am I really feeling stressed? The answer, of course, is yes! 1-12 *Utilization*
- ♦ I need to simply relax, though, and have fun with it. 1-12 *Utilization*
- ♦ I'm in this just to see what happens. Which I need to keep reminding myself as I wake up stressed out at night with Korean characters dancing through my head! 1-13 *Utilization*
- ♦ I really do need to learn to relax about this whole process. Crazy dreams are a sign of the pressure that I'm putting on myself. And it's unnecessary pressure. I think most of it comes from trying to "catch up" to the level of the class. 1-13 *Utilization*
- ♦ I think I sometimes expect that I need to sit down and STUDY, when actually 20 minutes of review is better, a lot better, than nothing. This might tie in to the pressure that I put on myself with "catching up." 1-19 *Utilization*

### C. 3. Writing a language learning diary

- ♦ I'm realizing more and more that I must have these skills/strategies to do well in class and to take tests...I must be using specific skills that help me "survive" in a classroom setting. Maybe I should try and figure out what those strategies are... 1-22 *Utilization*
- ♦ I think I need to explore that area more, about how I don't like to volunteer. 2-3

*Acknowledgment*

- ♦ My probing question for this week is: Why do I put off studying? Why is it the last thing I'll sit down and do? Is it simply laziness, or is there more to it? And if there is more to it - what is that? A deep-seated belief still that I'm not good at languages?...I think I need to continue to explore this issue. 2-3 *Utilization*

### III. Social Strategies

#### A. 1. Asking for clarification or verification

- ♦ No one made any offer to help me, and they seemed so desperate to finish quickly that I didn't want to interrupt to ask what was going on. Besides, it was one of those situations where I wasn't even sure where to begin asking questions. 1-8 *Acknowledgment*
- ♦ Another thing that helped me on the quiz was that I went to see the TA, Park, in her office today. She was incredibly sweet and very eager to help me...She seemed to have a good sense about her, and really pinpointed what was important for me to know. 1-13 *Utilization*
- ♦ One weakness of mine, though, is not asking more questions when I don't understand. I've never been much of a question-asker. 1-22 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*

#### A. 2. Asking for correction

- ♦ And I want someone to correct all my mistakes! 2-21 *Acknowledgment*

#### B. 1. Cooperating with peers

- ♦ Then, when we were divided into groups, I felt incredibly useless and bothersome. No one in my group tried to introduce themselves - they all seemed to know each other. I didn't initiate much because I felt so out of my league. So, I felt like no one really cared whether I was there or not, and I knew that I simply couldn't help them. 1-8 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*
- ♦ Groups had to translate sentences into Korean. Then, each group wrote their answers on the board, and then a different representative from each group graded another group's work. 1-10 *Modeling*
- ♦ My group met this week to plan more about our presentation...I was reminded that I don't really like working in groups if I don't know the people well. 2-14 *Acknowledgment/Rejection*

#### B. 2. Cooperating with a proficient user of the new language

- ♦ I met with Hyun today...I thought it was great that I could meet a native speaker the first evening and already have an offer for help. So, I said yes, we exchanged phone numbers and decided to try meeting once a week. 1-12 *Utilization*
- ♦ Hyun and I just have not been able to get our schedules together...So, this week, I met Jung, who is fascinating, but very serious about meeting weekly and paying me to help her with her English...In exchange, I get 20 minutes of Korean instruction. 1-31 *Utilization*
- ♦ I'll have to find a Korean friend to help me a little with this. 3-10 *Utilization*

#### C. 1. Developing cultural understanding

- ♦ ...they didn't know each other and I didn't know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture (or language for that matter!) 1-12 *Acknowledgment*
- ♦ ...I went to see the TA, Park, in her office today...After meeting with Hyun, I was glad to find someone who could explain the language well...However, she hinted a lot at what would be on the quiz. For example, she told me what specific vocabulary I needed to know. I thought it was her way of helping out this floundering newcomer! 1-13 *Utilization*
- ♦ A cultural note - it seems like Koreans are similar to Chinese in some ways, in the asking of favors! 1-31 *Utilization*

## **C. 2. Becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings**

♦ As we were meeting, another Korean friend of mine came up to talk and I tried to introduce her to Hyun. But, they didn't know each other and I didn't know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture...I felt quite awkward, and picked up that the two of them did also. Is this a typical way that Koreans feel each other out? 1-12 *Utilization*

♦ I hadn't realized before I met her that she had such an agenda! She insisted on paying me, which I don't want, because then I feel that I need to also pay her for her help with Korean. 1-31 *Utilization*



### Appendix 3. Utilization of Learning Strategies

Utilization		Acknowledgment	Acknowledgment/ Rejection	Modeled
D.1.A.1.	ID.1.A.2	D.1.A.3.	D.1.B.4.	D.1.A.1.
D.1.C.1.	ID.1.A.2	D.1.C.1.	D.1.B.4.	D.2.C.4.
D.1.D.2	ID.1.A.2	D.2.A.1.	D.1.D.2.	D.2.C.4.
D.1.D.2	ID.1.A.2	ID.1.A.2.	ID.1.B.5.	D.2.D.1.
D.1.D.2	ID.1.A.2	ID.1.B.3.	ID.1.B.6.	ID.1.B.3.
D.2.A.1.	ID.1.A.2	ID.1.B.4.	ID.3.A.1.	ID.3.B.1.
D.2.A.1.	ID.1.B.1	ID.1.B.4.	ID.3.B.1.	
D.2.A.1.	ID.1.B.2	ID.1.B.4.	ID.3.B.1.	
D.2.A.2	ID.1.B.3	ID.1.B.4.		
D.2.A.3.	ID.1.B.3	ID.1.B.6.		
D.2.C.1.	ID.1.B.3	ID.1.B.6.		
D.2.C.3.	ID.1.B.4	ID.2.C.3.		
D.2.C.4.	ID.1.B.4	ID.3.A.1.		
D.2.D.1.	ID.1.B.4	ID.3.A.2.		
D.3.A.1.	ID.1.B.4	ID.3.C.1.		
D.3.A.1.	ID.1.B.4	ID.3.C.1.		
D.3.A.1.	ID.1.B.4			
	ID.1.B.4			
	ID.1.B.4			
	ID.1.B.5			
	ID.1.B.6			
	ID.1.B.6			
	ID.1.C.1			
	ID.1.C.2			
	ID.2.C.1			
	ID.2.C.1			
	ID.2.C.1			
	ID.2.C.1			
	ID.2.C.1			
	ID.2.C.1			
	ID.2.C.1			
	ID.2.C.3			
	ID.2.C.3			
	ID.3.A.1			
	ID.3.B.2			
	ID.3.B.2			
	ID.3.B.2			
	ID.3.C.1			
	ID.3.C.2			
	ID.3.C.2			



## Appendix 4. Motivational Factors and Learning Strategies - Comment Overlap

### 1. Language level - Integrative Motivational Subsystem

#### Indirect strategy: metacognitive, practice opportunities

- ♦ Feb. 5 The hard part about learning a foreign language in the USA is simply making it a part of your life.
- ♦ Feb. 21 Last Saturday I went to “Taste of Korea.” It was a fund-raiser for Korean students... But, for me, the funny part of the afternoon was when Sherry came up as I was eating and whispered something in Korean in my ear. My first reaction was to freeze. I understood the verb “to eat” but didn’t understand anything else. And I wanted to impress her! But it didn’t work. Instead, all I felt was awkward.

#### Indirect strategy: social, cooperating with a native speaker

- ♦ Jan. 12 Already I’ve met some new Korean people, so let me take it for what it’s worth...As we were meeting, another Korean friend of mine came up to talk and I tried to introduce her to Hyun.

#### Indirect strategy: social, developing cultural understanding

- ♦ Jan. 12 As we were meeting, another Korean friend of mine came up to talk and I tried to introduce her to Hyun. But, they didn’t know each other and I didn’t know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture (or language, for that matter!) They had to feel each other out. I felt quite awkward, and picked up that the two of them did, also. Is this a typical way that Koreans feel each other out? How can they know how to address the other in the hierarchy of things when they first meet? After they meet, how long does it take to establish who is older, younger, “higher,” “lower,” etc.?
- ♦ Jan. 31 A cultural note - it seems like Koreans are similar to Chinese in some ways, in the asking of favors! I had a Korean woman call me the other night...

#### Indirect strategy: social, being aware of other’s thoughts and feelings

- ♦ Jan. 12 ...they didn’t know each other and I didn’t know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture (or language, for that matter!) They had to feel each other out. I felt quite awkward, and picked up that the two of them did, also.
- ♦ Jan. 31 A cultural note - it seems like Koreans are similar to Chinese in some ways, in the asking of favors! I had a Korean woman call me the other night...(I was trying to figure out how to properly deal with the asking of favors and requests from Koreans - relying on my experience in China)

### 2. Language Level - Instrumental Motivational Subsystem

#### Direct strategy: memory, grouping

- ♦ Jan. 10 ...I need so much catching up in this area. I can tell that the class already knows a great repertoire of verbs, of which I know none. So, I’ve started...(desire seems to be to catch up because of the class, not because of internal motivation)

Indirect strategy: affective, listening to body

♦ Jan. 19 I think I sometimes expect that I need to sit down and STUDY, when actually 20 minutes of review is better, a lot better, than nothing. This might tie in to the pressure that I put on myself with “catching up.”

### 3. Learner Level - Need for Achievement

Direct strategy: cognitive, practice writing system

♦ Jan. 6 I was happy that I had at least studied the alphabet so well over Christmas break. I could copy down all the words from the board, and at least understand the system...

Direct strategy: compensation, using linguistic cues

♦ Jan. 13 I was writing a second quarter quiz. The really amusing thing is that I felt I did okay, for quite a number of reasons.

### 4. Learner Level - Self-confidence: Language use anxiety

Direct strategy: cognitive, repeating

♦ Feb. 3 I felt nervous once I started to record and had to do it a few times.

Indirect strategy: metacognitive, paying attention

♦ Jan. 15 It's so amazing to feel so nervous to stand up in front of the class and recite a few words. And I usually stand up in front of classes! But, this was different. I found myself not even once thinking of the meaning...

Indirect strategy: affective, listening to your body

♦ Jan. 10 ..it was quite unsettling to wake up feeling so stressed like that. I need to relax a little!

♦ Jan. 13 I really do need to learn to relax about this whole process. Crazy dreams are a sign of the pressure that I'm putting on myself. And it's unnecessary pressure.

### 5. Learning Situation Level - Group - Specific: Relevance

Indirect Strategy: metacognitive, identifying the purpose of a language task

♦ Jan. 22 Park asked us to copy each of our mistakes 5 times. I really don't understand the purpose of that. To practice penmanship? To help memorize vocabulary? There really hasn't been a push in class to learn new vocabulary.

♦ Jan. 27 Park often writes by hand the whole quiz on the blackboard...(about wasting time going over the quiz - haven't figured out what quizzes are testing...no communicative activities) - *incorporates 2 comments for learning strategies*

♦ Feb. 3 One example of getting no feedback happened in class tonight...that makes me question again the purpose of the activity. Is it only to give context to number practice? Is it simply to fill up time in class?

♦ Feb. 12 It won't stick in my head because there's not any, any reason at all to use that conversation here in Minneapolis. (context of subway vocabulary)

♦ Feb. 14 I kept thinking that these were not the most useful words to know, and that when would I ever need to use them again? Lipstick??? For crying out loud! (vocabulary game with Li)

- ♦ Feb. 24 ...what is the stupid purpose of these group projects anyway? It sure isn't helping me learn Korean....This is not helping at all.
- ♦ Mar. 3 However, she “gave” us the reading selection by writing it on the board first, and then we had to copy it down. So, is that legitimate “reading?” “Copying?”
- ♦ Mar. 3 Then, however, she didn't use the video well, so it was confusing.



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## The Language Diary

### January 6

The first actual night of Korean class - so many things to reflect on! I went to class feeling slightly nervous about the unknown. Would I be so, so lost that I'd feel discouraged? Would I be able to follow everything?

The size of the class surprised me when I first walked in. There were about 25 people in the room. I could tell that they had all formed a bond over first quarter, and so I immediately felt like a stranger and definitely not in the group. When familiar faces walked in, each person was greeted with a type of group hello or acknowledgment. I sat pretty close to the door, because I felt a bit shy and didn't know if the class had a predetermined "seating" arrangement from last quarter - for example, if certain people sat next together all the time, etc. I also somehow felt the need to let people around me know that this was my first quarter. As if they could miss. So, as we waited for the teacher, another woman close to me was friendly and started asking questions. She wanted to know why I was starting second quarter. After some conversation with a few people around me, I found out that there was one other woman who was new to the class. The class had been advertised as a beginning class; this woman, from the Spanish department, wanted to try her hand at another language. Also sitting close was a Korean woman, Hyun, who was going to be the future TA for the course. She was there simply to observe how the class went. Because we were all new, we sat next to each other and had our own conversation, since it was so obvious that we weren't known by the others.

Another surprise to me, though it shouldn't have been, was the number of Asian students in the class. There were only about 5 white faces, the rest were Asian, either 2nd generation Koreans, or adopted Koreans, or a few Japanese.

I like being in the minority again, though. It's nice to step out and experience that kind of ratio once in a while. It reminds me of being in China.

The teacher, Li, seems very nice. As soon as she walked in the whole class responded, and I could tell that she is well liked. She seems to have a good rapport with the class. During the class she spoke some Korean and some English. Almost all her Korean utterances were translated for our benefit. Even with her translations, though, I still felt very lost. She did some review of expressions and vocabulary, such as place names. Of course, I didn't know any of this. However, I was happy that I had at least studied the alphabet so well over Christmas break. I could copy down all the words from the board, and at least understand the system and sound out each word, if I was given time. The woman from the Spanish department didn't copy down anything because I don't think she was sure about the writing. I could tell that she was lost and upset because the class had been advertised as a beginning class, and it obviously wasn't. She left during the break and never came back. For me, however, I was a little proud of myself and felt good about the fact that I could copy things down from the board.

However, my general feeling is overwhelmed. I spoke with Li during the break and she said I should try to work my way through the packet from last quarter, maybe one lesson every day. Even that seemed a lot to me. If all I had to do was read through each lesson, that should be no problem. However, it is the remembering of the language that takes me so long. Looking at one lesson each day wouldn't guarantee that anything would stick in my head. My biggest problem is that I don't know where to start or what to do. I don't like being behind, but how can I catch up and also stay on top of the current lessons? Should I start memorizing lists of vocabulary words? My problem with this is that the words don't stick in my head without any kind of context. The Korean sounds are still so different and foreign to me. I can try to come up with some "sounds like" mnemonic devices, but that bogs me down, too. There are too many words to learn. For the letters and numbers and days of the week, etc., I'll make flashcards. They

help me review, at least. I have even struggled trying to learn the numbers, because there are two counting systems, and one is similar to Chinese, but the other doesn't have any bearing or semblance of anything. I guess the only way to learn that is by repetition.

I also spoke with one student during the break, another of the few white faces in the class, who mentioned that the most difficult thing for him last quarter was learning the writing system. I realized then, that after trying to learn some Chinese characters, this was a breeze. Not only do I enjoy writing characters, but it makes it so much more plausible when each one is assigned a sound. The Korean written system is a beautiful and logical work of art, in my mind!

### January 8

Well, I'm starting off my first week of class with many questions. First of all, I've been thinking about my actual motivation for studying this language. After initially being so sold on the idea of going to Korea, now I just don't know, and there are times when I wonder why I didn't try harder to get into Chinese classes. Why am I going to put so much effort into this if I have no clue about the future? Will I ever use it? Also, how can I turn my back on China? Because, in a sense, that is what I feel like I'm doing. I remember trying to communicate with one former student of mine from China that I was going to start studying Korean. And my old Chinese tutor - total lack of comprehension about my decision. She suggested I try Japanese. I can't tell her that for some reason I have no interest in Japanese, can I? So - as my motivation for studying is being questioned, I tend to have many doubts about if this is the right thing to do. How much effort, then, should I put into this?

Another interesting phenomena is that I found myself feeling quite frustrated at the teacher this week. Some of my frustration at feeling behind and not in the group is focused elsewhere - like at the teacher. During class, as I didn't know what was happening, I found myself thinking "How could she let me into the class second quarter, knowing I would be so behind? How could she let me in at this stage? How dare she advertise this class as a beginning class when it so obviously isn't? How could she not require any prerequisites?" I wanted to place blame for my confusion and lack of comprehension on her.

I need to keep reminding myself that this was MY decision to take this class, not hers!

I felt like much more of an outsider in the class tonight than last time. I think part of it was because it hit me that I don't belong in the same bracket as most of the other students. I'm not Asian at all; I can't relate to any of their experiences as adoptees. There also is an age difference; most of them are undergraduates. I really don't know what is happening in the class at this stage, and they do...so, again, I felt very much like an outsider. Also, I feel like identity in this class is based on language ability. At this point, I really don't have much ability, so in that sense I feel like a non-entity. I'm a deadweight - trying to listen and copy down as much as I can, but not wanting or knowing how to respond or answer to anything. Deathly afraid of being asked a question. Knowing I'll have to respond with "I don't know." Hoping that the teacher will give me a break for the first few classes until I catch up.

At the end of class today the teacher divided us up into 4 groups. She did it by having us count off in Korean. It was funny to me how nervous I felt to simply say the number "4" out loud in Korean as we were counting off. I even know this well, because I had worked on learning numbers. So, it wasn't as if I didn't know what was going on, it was simply the first time I had spoken Korean in the class. I felt incredibly self-conscious to even say a one-syllable word. Then, when we were divided into groups, I felt incredibly useless and bothersome. No one in my group tried to introduce themselves - they all seemed to know each other. I didn't initiate much because I felt so out of my league. So, I felt like no one really cared whether I was there or not, and I knew that I simply couldn't help them. The assignment was to translate 5 sentences from English to Korean. The group was large - 6 people, so it almost functioned as 2 groups. At first I

tried to keep up and copy what other people were writing, but I finally simply gave up. No one made any offer to help me, and they seemed so desperate to finish quickly that I didn't want to interrupt to ask what was going on. Besides, it was one of those situations where I wasn't even sure where to begin asking questions. After awhile, everyone was working too fast, so I wasn't able to follow or write down the answers. I ended up just sitting there feeling like a dunce. The evening felt incredibly long.

### January 10

So many things are going through my head the first week of class. One funny thing happened. I've decided it's not a good thing to go through flashcards right before I go to sleep! I woke up at 2:00 AM last night/morning, completely tossing and turning, trying to remember this Korean word, that Korean word...trying to figure out how to use the notes and the books to help me learn quickly. I also have a bad cold, so it was inevitable for me to wake up sooner or later. But, it was quite unsettling to wake up feeling so stressed like that. I need to relax a little!

In class this week I've been overwhelmed with all the vocabulary coming at me. That was one area which I didn't prepare for very well before I began the class. I enjoyed studying the alphabet, and learning the sounds for each symbol. I also tried to write words and memorize some key phrases. But, I didn't spend a lot of time learning new words. Partly because they didn't stick in my head. I had no context to embed them to. No way, unless I used an incredible amount of mnemonic devices, of remembering the order of sounds. So, this week, I felt like there was an onslaught. One of my big questions as a teacher has always been how to teach vocabulary. So, I'm glad that I can be on the other end. In class the first night, Li simply wrote a list on the board. She did introduce the vocabulary according to subject - such as place, or building names. However, I need so much catching up in this area. I can tell that the class already knows a great repertoire of verbs, of which I know none. So, I've started lists in my notebook, hoping that categorizing words can help me learn more easily. I have a list of verbs, place names, question words (very small at this point). Which reminds me that I haven't caught on to the formation of questions yet. I've been trying to see if there is a question marker or not, or where the question word goes. We went over, as a very quick review in class, an activity where students had to supply the correct question word in the sentence. I got so lost - and didn't understand some of the questions. There seems to be different words for "what" and I had no comprehension about the differences.

Also, to help me study I want to start making flashcards. I figure repetition is a good thing. So far I've made flashcards with numbers, and days of the week. (Even those aren't sticking too well in my head!) After going through that exercise in class I think I'll make a set of question words, and I hope to start a list of verbs. Verbs seem pretty important in class.

We also started talking about styles of speech in Korean. I find this, again, very confusing. I had heard something about this previously from some Korean friends, so it's not a totally new concept. However, the explanation in class was brief. Students in the class still seemed confused, so I'm not totally alone in this. I've heard there are 4 styles, but only three are mentioned in the text. And then there's this honorific thing, which baffles me a little. I think if I ever went to Korea I would make many taboo errors in addressing people - older, my age, younger. And how do you establish the relationship when you can use the intimate form? Especially if I were to go there, as an outsider? I wonder how forgiving Koreans would be to an outsider, if it's obvious I'm at least making an attempt to speak their language? One of my classmates is Korean. If I speak to her in Korean, I don't know at all what style I should use, but I think she would be quite understanding if I goof up and have to ask her a lot of questions. I just don't want to make too many mistakes, though, or somehow offend without even trying!

This is getting to be a long entry! But one more thing that I really noticed this week, coming in to the class having taught ESL for 5 years, is what the teacher did. I always sit in class with this extra sense of how everything is structured and carried out! For examples for grammar points, Li often has students supply the verbs to be conjugated. Which is nice, because it interests students more, and at this point that's about all that is actually spoken in Korean by the students. She often has students write answers on the board for exercises, etc. I like the fact that students can then get up, move around, learn from others' mistakes. She had a group competition, which I thought was interesting. Groups had to translate sentences into Korean. Then, each group wrote their answers on the board, and then a different representative from each group graded another group's work. I'm not sure I was sold on this idea. It really took a lot of time, and because I was feeling so out of it anyway, it didn't really help me. I guess that's why, actually, I focused on teaching methods, because the Korean content of the lesson that night was too much for me.

### January 12

I woke up again last night with little Korean characters running through my head. They didn't quite all form words, though. I remember trying so hard to make them correctly fit together, thinking that comprehension would then come, but it never did. I wonder why these dreams? Am I really feeling stressed?

The answer, of course, is yes! I feel like I need to catch up fast, and it's not happening. I lack so much vocabulary. I've been studying the forms and styles and I understand the basic concepts, but hardly have any verbs yet in my vocabulary. I need to simply relax, though, and have fun with it. Up to now I've been considering it more of a chore. Probably because I'm thinking about a plan B, and that takes away some of the fun. I need to keep the ultimate end goal in mind, though - to just experience learning a language. Simply that, with all its intricacies and grammar rules and sounds. There is no reason that I need to come out fluent at the end of the process! Especially after only one or two quarters!!

Already I've met some new Korean people, so let me take it for what it's worth. I met with Hyun today. After the first night of class she felt me out a bit to see if I wanted to be her tandem partner. I thought it was great that I could meet a native speaker the first evening and already have an offer for help. So, I said yes, we exchanged phone numbers and decided to try meeting once a week. Well, after our first meeting today I wasn't too thrilled about the set-up. She doesn't know how to explain her own language, which is really to be expected. I, of all people, should know that simply because I speak a language doesn't mean I can vocalize the rules behind it. I think that the materials surprised her a bit. I had some questions about verb endings that I didn't understand. There seem to be irregularities in the different styles. She didn't really know how to answer my questions and wanted to rely on Li's answer. But she needs to figure this out if she'll be the TA next quarter. Again, I feared that what I needed from her might be too boring for her, but I can't worry too much about that. As we were meeting, another Korean friend of mine came up to talk and I tried to introduce her to Hyun. But, they didn't know each other and I didn't know how to introduce them properly in the Korean culture (or language, for that matter!) They had to feel each other out. I felt quite awkward, and picked up that the two of them did, also. Is this a typical way that Koreans feel each other out? How can they know how to address the other in the hierarchy of things when they first meet? After they meet, how long does it take to establish who is older, younger, "higher", "lower", etc.?

### January 13

First quiz in class today. I just had to laugh inside, because I thought it was funny that after only one week of instruction I was writing a second quarter quiz. The really amusing thing

is that I felt I did okay, for quite a number of reasons. The first part of the test was listening. And I would have died on that part except the questions were written in English and we could respond in English. So, I could get by with guessing a lot. Another thing that helped me is transfer. That was another surprise to me, simply because I hadn't thought much about it before. However, I first noticed it with the word "library." The Korean word for library sounds a lot like the Chinese word. When I first realized that, I found it quite amusing. I also began to hope that this could help me learn vocabulary. However, I don't know, for pronunciation purposes, if it's very helpful, since I tend to put the Chinese vowels into the word. However, in a testing situation it is a blessing. On one listening question, I heard the word "library," and that was all I needed to guess the correct answer.

Another part of the test was on conjugating verbs. Well, I knew the rules to do this - most of the decisions come from what vowel the verb stem ends in. At this point I can easily recognize vowels, so I conjugated to my hearts' content. Did I know any of the verbs I was working with? Not one of them! But, for that part, meaning wasn't necessary. Another part of the quiz was circling the correct subject particle, again based on vowel and consonant endings of each noun. So, I had no trouble with that. Another thing that helped me on the quiz was that I went to see the TA, Park, in her office today. She was incredibly sweet and very eager to help me. After meeting with Hyun, I was glad to find someone who could explain the language well. She seemed to have a good sense about her, and really pinpointed what was important for me to know. Park even offered meeting earlier next week so we would have uninterrupted time to talk. However, she also hinted a lot at what would be on the quiz. For example, she told me what specific vocabulary I needed to know. I thought it was her way of helping out this floundering newcomer! It surprised me, but I didn't mind the extra help. However, I'm pretty sure that I registered for this class pass or fail, so the little grades don't really matter much to me. I'm in this just to see what happens. Which I need to keep reminding myself as I wake up stressed out at night with Korean characters dancing through my head!

So, overall, tonight I was actually pretty happy with myself, for at least appearing like I have it together. But, my luck on the quiz also reminds me that throughout my entire educational career I've always "survived" classes well, regardless of whether I felt like I understood the material well. I'm reminded of my French experience - getting A's in each class, but never feeling like I learned French. Following rules is something I can do quite well! Also, it's a reminder that I seem to have test-taking skills.

I found a nice, relaxing atmosphere in Starbucks this afternoon. I'm discovering I can't study in my office. There's too much clutter there, and too many people, and too many distractions. Some of my office mates are very chatty, and studying language is one thing I can't do while I'm distracted. I also have this great habit of doing anything else instead of studying. So, if I sit at my desk, I often end up grading papers, or planning lessons, or some such thing. But, a nice cup of tea, some fun jazz music, and I enjoyed studying. I really do need to learn to relax about this whole process. Crazy dreams are a sign of the pressure that I'm putting on myself. And it's unnecessary pressure. I think most of it comes from trying to "catch up" to the level of the class.

### January 15

Tonight in class we had to do our first oral performance. At first when this was assigned, I couldn't believe it. Two days to memorize two short dialogs. Yikes! And the purpose of it? It took me awhile to first go through the dialog and understand what it all meant. I'm really slow using the dictionary. It took me a long time to look up all the new words. I'm still not exactly sure how that all works - and many times I'm not sure if I need to look up a 1 or 2 syllable unit. It has kind of a crazy pattern - well, crazy to me because I'm not used to it. It's organized

according to an order that I simply need to memorize. I tried to memorize the Korean alphabet in that specific order when I was first learning, but it's been a while and when I go through the flashcards they're not in any order. So, my approach this time was to first guess what the English word was and to go from there. That was easier for me this time because I could guess the general drift of the conversation. I was finally able to decipher it all and from there I could memorize it. Luckily, I've always been able to memorize things well short-term. I really didn't have any trouble memorizing. The trouble for me tonight was the nerves. It's so amazing to feel so nervous to stand up in front of the class and recite a few words. And I usually stand up in front of classes! But, this was different. I found myself not even once thinking of the meaning. Once I'd memorized it, then I just went with the sound and the flow, simply because I couldn't translate fast enough in my head. I think I also felt nervous, on top of everything else, because I still don't feel like I "belong" in the class. When I had to stand up in front of everyone, it was a weird statement for me. I felt like I was somehow officially announcing my presence in the class. At the same time I was scared to expose my poor pronunciation and possibly a lack of knowledge.

Before "performing" the dialogs, we practiced them a few times as a class, and then listened to each pair perform. That was not a good thing. I had memorized according to my speed, intonation, and pronunciation. Hearing other people speak didn't help me at all. It actually confused me to hear their different pronunciations and intonations. So, listening to other students, even if they were much more "correct" started to confuse me. I couldn't necessarily follow what they were saying even if I knew exactly what they were saying. Next time I should simply volunteer to go first and get it over with. I still have trouble getting the words out of my mouth

Each pair had to stand in front of the class to recite the dialog. That made it somehow even more formal; I'm not sure of the exact purpose of making each student stand in the front of the classroom. I'm not sure how we were graded, either. On memory? To me that's not valid grounds on which to judge language learning. But we never received any comment at all, except a "good" after each pair went. So, if we were graded on pronunciation, then I never found out how good or bad mine was. I could only compare that difference with other students, according to my perception of "correct" Korean pronunciation.

### January 19

Well, at this stage in time my main feeling is frustration. At myself! I had a nice three-day weekend, and I managed to put off studying the entire time. Always something else I had to do or wanted to do: cross-country skiing, visiting with Grandma and Darlene and Dia, talking on the phone, contra dancing, cooking, lesson plans for citizenship class...and I didn't crack a Korean book once. I haven't yet made those flashcards of verbs that I keep meaning to. I don't quite know why I put things off. I think I sometimes expect that I need to sit down and STUDY, when actually 20 minutes of review is better, a lot better, than nothing. This might tie in to the pressure that I put on myself with "catching up." This, then, becomes something that I "have to do," and not an enjoyable hobby that I'm interested in. This is when the nitty gritty needs to happen, and so far, I'm not doing great at it.

One thing I didn't note after class on Thursday - after the break, Li taught us a song about snow. I was excited to think about learning a song, because I love to sing. I also have taught my students songs, so I thought this would be a good time to experience! Well, I found it a lot harder than I thought it would be! For one thing, the vocabulary was difficult, and Li's explanation went by so fast. Then, she had us repeat the words to practice saying them. If we said them slowly, I could keep up. But when she had us repeat them more quickly, my tongue simply got tangled. I think it was a combination of my slow reading skill, and the strangeness of

pronouncing new sound combinations. When we started singing, the melody was pretty simple, but again, whenever she tried to speed us up, my mouth simply couldn't keep up. I tried, but ended up butchering words, having entirely wrong vowels come out of my mouth...so, there were times that I just ended up humming the melody. Park helped Li and even taught us some funny hand motions. But, I felt bad that I couldn't really do it. By the end, I simply hummed along. Now, as I write this, I can't remember the melody and therefore probably won't do much review of this song, unless they try it again in class. It was a good lesson for me that when I teach songs in English to my students, repetition is a good thing - and it helps to go slowly at first. I tend to forget that students might simply be challenged with the "English sounds" of the language.

### January 20

Well, my weekend has caught up with me. I felt so out of it in class tonight. First, I went to visit Park during office hours again. She had so kindly offered to meet me at an earlier time. Well, of course, when I got there, I didn't have any questions to ask because I really hadn't looked at anything that much over the weekend. I hadn't learned the new vocabulary that I had wanted to. So, I ended up feeling quite stupid, and inside I was really disappointed at myself for not being able to make better use of that time. I don't know what I was thinking. Last week Park was so good at helping me along, and she did again, but I really felt bad that I couldn't lead the conversation more. After all, she had offered to meet me because she wanted to help ME. Another thing I really noticed during that session was how slow I was at reading anything she put before me. Three days and wow - those letters seemed quite foggy at first and at a distance for my grabbing. Maybe that's what frustrated me the most - how far away my Korean felt, and how much I had seemed to forget in such a short time.

Park made a crossword puzzle for class tonight. She showed it to me during our session to ask about the correct English for some of the clues. So, I knew that she had put a lot of time and effort into making it, writing up the clues, and forming the words together. One weird thing for me, though, was that in class she only gave us the crossword grid. The clues were all written down on the board. I'm finding that we have to do a lot of copying from the board in this class. I don't really like it, because it takes a lot of time. I didn't understand why the clues couldn't simply have been added to the paper. So, instead of spending time in class trying to work on this, we spent most of the time simply copying down the clues. Now, I need to go find the answers, but I'm not sure quite how to go about that!

I got a little frustrated with myself today, too, on the quiz. As I was doing the listening part, I thought I caught the word "house" in the sentence. So, at first I wrote down an answer based on that response, "She is cleaning the house." After, though, as I was checking the test, I thought it was a bit of a stretch for the answer to be that. I knew that when I first learned the words for "book" and for "house" they sounded similar to me. I clearly remembered thinking that. So, in my deliberations over this answer, I thought that maybe it wasn't the word "house," but the word "book." So, I changed the entire answer to "She is reading a book." Somehow, I thought that was a more common, reasonable answer. Then, as we were going over the test in class, I found out my first answer had been correct. Aaargh! Why did I second-guess myself? I remember doing this in Phonetics class, too, with the dictations. If I just trusted my first instinct, then many times it was okay. Whenever I try to reason things out and deliberate, I often make mistakes. So, I was simply frustrated today!

### January 22

I'm starting to get to know some of the students in the class by now. I sit next to the same women every night. They tend to latch on to each other because they're misfits in the class, too.

(How nice of me to say! I know it's a judgment call on my part.) Sara is a high school student whose mother is Korean. Katie is a white woman who is dating a Korean. They, along with myself, aren't in the undergraduate majority of the class that likes to go out and drink beer after class, so it's okay for us to "stick" together. (We need to stick together.) And they've done a nice job of including me. During break, quite a few students go out to smoke. Maybe it's the smoking clique that predominates in the class. I still don't know. The rest of us head down to the vending machines. It's at these times that I am starting to talk with others in the class and overhear comments. Many students are frustrated with the class. I guess that last quarter the pace was quick and they learned a lot of vocabulary and conversational information. They must have memorized and gone over many dialogs. This quarter is grammar-based, and quite a few don't like it and say it's difficult. Also, I have sensed that since they went so quickly last quarter, not all of it stuck, and some are frustrated with what they've forgotten. I'm realizing more and more that I must have these skills/strategies to do well in class and to take tests. Believe it or not, I got a better grade on my second quiz than on my first, even after not studying last weekend. I think my grades are quite comparable to other students' that did study last quarter. So, I must be using specific skills that help me "survive" in a classroom setting. Maybe I should try to figure out exactly what those strategies are:

- hearing/translating only one word, and having a sense to guess from there. So far, that's worked well on quizzes. For example, I'll answer a question the best that I can, and simply leave blank what I don't know.
- being able to remember and follow rules for verb endings (not necessarily needing to know the meanings). This must be an ability to focus on form, not meaning, which is a fine way to survive in a class that also focuses on form.
- knowing something about grammar and language structure - I'm actually admitting here that taking Linguistic Analysis was a good thing in this case!
- having a good short term memory
- being willing to try, even if it's wrong (This actually happens only in writing - not in speaking. I feel okay guessing on answers on tests and written homework).

One weakness of mine, though, is not asking more questions when I don't understand. I've never been much of a question-asker.

Before class tonight I visited Li during office hours. I had tried two weeks ago, but she had never shown. I just wanted to touch base with her, really, and see how I was doing and if there was any specific thing I needed to work on to catch up. She was very nice, but we didn't talk much about Korean. We simply chatted for a bit, and I told her why I was taking the class. I guess it was necessary for me to establish some kind of relationship with her, since she already knows the other students in the class. We talked a little bit about the crossword puzzle homework. She made a comment on how much work it took and how all the vocabulary was all out of context. I agreed with her, because it really was. But, Park had been trying to make vocabulary learning a little more fun, which also is important. Then, in class tonight we went over the crossword puzzle. I had done okay on my own, but for some of the clues I needed help. It was a great attempt to make the class fun; I could overhear many comments that other students really enjoyed the challenge. After we had gone over the answers, Park asked us to copy each of our mistakes 5 times. I really don't understand the purpose of that. To practice penmanship? To help memorize vocabulary? There really hasn't been a push in class to learn new vocabulary. Li will sometimes mention that we need to learn more vocabulary, but there's no overt instruction or testing on it.

### January 24

I went to a Korean restaurant with a group of friends tonight. It was fun, because it was the first time I'd been to a Korean restaurant since I started studying Korean. On the menu I recognized a lot of different food words that I've heard in class but really don't know what they are. Most of my friends didn't know that I've started studying Korean. It was fun for me to sit back and simply listen to some of their comments. The restaurant is divided into two main rooms, with the lobby or entrance in the middle. We were sitting in the room that looked ready for Karaoki, if the need arose. Half-way through the meal Tom leaned over and made a comment about the segregation. He noticed that the other room was populated only by Asians, and in our room the large majority were white. He laughed and thought it was funny that we had been separated from the Asians, and wondered why that was. Could we not be trusted? Did they think we would be rude, somehow, and offend? I thought it was funny that he had that interpretation on the situation, because after glancing at the different rooms, I saw it was simply a smoking/non-smoking set-up. Most of the Asians were smoking, most of the non-Asians weren't. A simple, cultural difference. I don't think he fully bought my answer, though; I think he wanted to have fun with the situation. I tried naeng myong - a type of cold noodle. I didn't really like it! But, I thought I would try something new. At the end of the evening, the waitress had put all our meals on one bill and we had to try and sort them out. Well, she had written everything in Korean, and people had no clue how to recognize what they'd ordered. This is when I felt a great surge of excitement, and probably a little desire to show off, and insisted that they pass me the bill so I could read it. Finally, a chance for some of my friends to see what I could do! Well, of course it didn't go smoothly. For one thing, I'm not used to reading Korean shorthand. For another thing, even if I correctly read off an entry, no one could remember the Korean name of what they'd ordered. So, in the long run I was no help to anyone. Sigh. I sure did try, though. We had to get a menu and have everyone find what they'd ordered again. It was a slow process. Then, the waiters were preparing the room for Karaoki, and finally had to move us out. I was curious to stay and see what happened. We waited until after 10:00, though, and not many people came. Only a few people sang. At the end of the evening I went outside, forgetting my leftovers on the table. So, I had to go running back inside. As I was leaving I thought, why not, so said "kamsa hamnida" to the serving lady. Her reaction was quite nice - a look of surprise and then a big smile. She said something else as I went out the door, but I didn't catch it. I'll need to learn restaurant vocabulary and go back and try it again!

### January 27

Another quiz in class and another night of feeling frustrated! I'm just not doing well on these quizzes. I get mad at myself because on the weekends I tend to relax and not study as hard. But the quiz comes every Tuesday and I always feel unprepared. Another thing which frustrates me is that the content of the quiz is often a surprise. Li will hint about what vocabulary will be on the test, and then it isn't. Or else, different vocabulary that we've hardly focused on in class will be on the quiz, and of course I never remember that well. Tonight I blew the whole vocabulary section because it came from the crossword puzzle vocabulary. For some reason, I had completely forgotten to do my homework and write each corrected answer over 5 times. I also had misinterpreted the importance of the vocabulary from it. So, there was a whole list of words that I simply couldn't remember, and that makes me kick myself.

Each night after taking the quiz, we correct it point by point. Park often writes by hand the whole quiz on the blackboard, and then students one by one go up to the board to write answers. This always unnerves me, because I often can't remember exactly what I've written on the test. So, I can see a few items that were either right or wrong, but I think this class time is a big waste. It usually is quite painstakingly long to go through the entire test. So, over an hour of

class is spent taking it and then going through it. I also get frustrated because we never do any listening exercises except on the quiz. So, without any practice, suddenly we're tested on our listening ability. This makes me wonder - is it good, then, that at least we get some listening practice every week, even if it is only in a testing situation? I still haven't really figured what the quizzes are actually testing. There often doesn't seem to be much of a focus for lessons, outside of grammar points. And we haven't done one communicative activity yet! I am hearing more and more from other students about the class. So many people are griping a little - some say that the pace is slow because we are reviewing and really focusing on each grammar point. Others just don't like studying grammar. They say it confuses them. I keep thinking that I'm glad we are focusing on grammar because I can keep up with that and don't feel quite so behind. Also, I think that the pace isn't too slow, simply because we aren't practicing each point enough. We do a few exercises, but not enough for each thing to really stick in my head. So, whenever I try to write on my own, I always feel so, so hesitant and need to go back in my text to look up if it's right or wrong.

### January 29

I've started a little vocabulary notebook. I learned this from a friend when I was studying Chinese. There really isn't any organization to it, but I simply add new words as they come up, Korean on one side of the page, English on the other, and then I can easily review. Of course, with this method, I can choose which way I want to translate. Usually, though, I choose the easier way of going from Korean to English. My goal is to whip through these words once a day. Of course, I haven't been very consistent with that. I never seem to change, do I?

Last Tuesday we had a lesson looking at family vocabulary. I had to laugh as we did this, because I've done this with my own students many times. First, Park gave us a worksheet that formally explained family relations and had blanks for students to fill in for each family relationship. Because this had been covered last quarter, it was supposedly a review. For me, the new one (!), it was all new, so I had to stay on top of it, write fast, and work to keep up. I still have some trouble sounding out the spelling of words. Also, it was presented in a disjointed manner. We jumped from space to space, sometimes talking about the mother's side of the family, sometimes the father's side. Then, after we had received this new vocabulary, we had to practice by filling in Park's family tree. She told us in English who was in her family, and we filled in a model family tree in Korean. However, there was no real practice besides filling in Park's family tree. We didn't make a family tree for ourselves, which would have personalized it nicely for everyone. So, will this vocabulary stick in my head? No! I thought it would have been nice if we were given some stock phrases like:

How many people are in your family?

I have \_\_\_\_\_.

Then we could have practiced and made it personal. So far, this class hasn't been very communicative. Am I really surprised by this? No! Just a little disappointed.

### January 31

A cultural note - it seems like Koreans are similar to Chinese in some ways, in the asking of favors! I had a Korean woman call me the other night. One of my friends had given her my name because she knew I was studying Korean. This woman, Jung, was interested in meeting weekly to have an exchange of language services. I thought, "why not?" - the more the merrier. Besides, Hyun and I just have not been able to get our schedules together. We hardly see each other anymore. So, this week I met Jung, who is fascinating, but very serious about meeting weekly and paying me to help her with her English, which makes me feel a little uncomfortable. In exchange, I get 20 minutes of Korean instruction. I hadn't realized before I met her that she

had such an agenda! She insisted on paying me, which I don't want, because then I feel that I need to also pay her for her help with Korean. That makes no sense, for her to pay me and then for me to pay her back. I also can see that her insistence on paying assures that she will get English help, whereas the free Korean time can be shoved aside more easily. Hmm. I need to learn how to deal with these situations. Then, Park is really nice and I like her. I think she really has a grasp of how to teach language. But, after we met a few times during her office hours, she asked me for a "favor" to proofread her papers. So, ...and because she'd already helped me, I didn't want to say no. Again, she offered to pay me, and I feel uncomfortable because she helped me freely. Do I need to pay a Korean tutor? I had assumed free help for free help. And there is Hyun, who I need to try and contact. Yikes! No wonder I feel like I'm always scrambling.

### February 3

I get so frustrated with myself in regard to Korean. I'm so good at putting off studying, and that really frustrates me. This is how it went for Chinese, and now Korean. But what also frustrates me is that I can get by with it. True, I felt like I bombed last week's quiz, but I didn't really care! It was a hard one. Some students in the class have asked me how I manage to follow and I keep thinking that I've always been good at class survival skills. Always. So, those are kicking in and I'm doing okay and don't feel like I'm learning much Korean in the process!

The teaching methodology frustrates me sometimes. For example, this last week we had to memorize two more dialogs. Between Tuesday and Thursday I never have a lot of time to study. And when I have to stand up in front of the class and perform and because I don't want to look like an idiot, my time is spent memorizing dialogs. I admit this does help a little with vocabulary, but I really should be spending more time learning other stuff, like practicing grammar, memorizing verbs, etc. Also, when we speak the dialogs in class, we get no feedback. So, what's the purpose? How can I improve my speech/pronunciation, etc., if there's no feedback?

One example of getting no feedback happened tonight in class. In order to practice numbers, we read through 3 different dialogs on the overhead (i.e. telephone numbers, money, time) It was good to get context for the use of these numbers. But, we repeated the dialog line by line after the teacher once, then 2 students came up to the front of the class and read it out loud. Again, it was okay practice for them, but why make them stand in the front of the classroom? Also, I know from my own teaching that it would have been very easy to divide the class into pairs and have everyone practice at the same time, instead of limiting it to two students in the class. During all of this hardly any comments were made in regard to pronunciation. So that makes me question again the purpose of the activity. Is it only to give context to number practice? Is it to simply fill up time in class? Another one of my downfalls in situations like these is that I don't like to volunteer. I end up, then, never getting much oral practice in the class. I think I need to explore that area more, about how I don't like to volunteer.

This week we also had to record our voices on tape. This cracked me up, because I've made students do this themselves. It was good practice. All we had to do was write 5 sentences and read them on the tape. However, I made sure I had carefully written each sentence and I practiced them a few times before putting my voice on tape. I felt nervous once I started to record and had to do it a few times. It was a bit of a hassle. But I'll be curious to see how Park handles them. What will her responses be? Will she talk on every one? Will she correct pronunciation?

I was frustrated with Jung this week. I realized, again, that it's very hard for a native speaker simply to describe their own language. As she looked over my homework, she said, "Oh, it should be this way," and couldn't explain why. As a language learner I'm starting to understand more and more why people want to know why and why they want all their written

mistakes corrected. Otherwise, how do you know? If I'm striving to look for patterns in the language it is extremely unsatisfying to hear that it just should be this way. Give me rules...give me exceptions to the rules...but most of all I want some kind of explanation.

My probing question for this week is: Why do I put off studying? Why is it the last thing I'll sit down and do? Is it simply laziness, or is there more to it? And if there is more to it - what is that? A deep-seated belief still that I'm not good at languages? A fear of trying really hard and still not doing well? An insecurity about my ability? Am I simply too busy? I think I need to continue to explore this issue.

### February 5

Finally, I feel like I'm starting to get on top of it. I studied Korean everyday this week (OK - 4 days in a row) but it's a start. 4th week into the quarter and it's about time I get my act together! But I need to make it a habit, otherwise it won't happen. It shouldn't be too difficult to go through vocabulary words at least once, if not 2 times a day. At work, I've often thought about how I don't give myself lunch breaks. I can start going to the lounge tables, and eating and reviewing. 15 minutes. It doesn't have to be a lot, anything is just better than nothing. And before I go to bed. I know I'm tired, but again, 10 minutes is better than nothing at all.

I'm not speaking much in Korean, except the memorized dialogs. I keep telling myself that it is okay - it's my "silent" period. But, I'm really not hearing a lot, either. I'm working more with the written word. I should ask for some Korean music tapes to borrow. The hard part about learning a foreign language in the USA is simply making it a part of your life.

Part of my problem with learning a language is my personality! Fancy that! I've thought this before, especially with my experience in China. For one thing, I am an introvert. That's all there is to it. Put me in a new situation, and I'm shy. My natural tendency is to observe. I want time to see and hear and experience, and then I'll feel more comfortable to act. I don't like going out on a limb in unknown territory. Over time, when I feel comfortable in a situation, then I feel more comfortable with taking risks. But my first instinct is to simply not have anything to say. So, as I learn a language, especially coming in new to an established class, I am just not going to volunteer much. Even when I know it's good for me, and there is absolutely no danger (!) in making mistakes or volunteering information. I still just don't find myself taking those steps much. So, I often get by without speaking hardly a word of Korean in class. And what is different here than my experience in China is that there I was immersed in Chinese. So, I actually picked up more of it than I usually gave myself credit for. In the USA, though, it's hard to find Korean contexts. The few materials that I've found, like the dictionary, are really, really expensive. Even with Korean friends, I don't feel like I know enough to converse with them in Korean. So, my conversations are still in English.

Finally, now, there are some vocabulary words, verbs, etc., that are sticking in my head. I realized this week that when Li asked for verbs to give grammar examples, I had some ready to suggest. That's a nice feeling!

Also, just this last week I started to catch a few little comments that Li mumbles all the time throughout class. One that I caught was "kurum," which is "then." That was a nice little moment for me!

In class, we are doing mostly a grammar approach. But, I'm not using it enough to really put all the pieces together, yet. I know these verbs, and some vocabulary words, but it still seems a mystery to me about how to put them all together to make a complete sentence. That's another reason why I don't speak much. I haven't yet seemed to put it all together in my mind. Do I wait first for that to happen, and then find I can speak? Or, do I first try speaking and find that encourages the pieces to come together?

Tonight we started talking about a group project that will have to be performed next month sometime. I guess they did a similar thing last quarter, where different groups planned a skit in Korean and then had to perform it. I am grouped with an odd assortment. It's just four of us, the two women that I usually stick with in class, Sara and Katie, and then a Japanese man, Kazu, who never says a word during class. I'm not sure why he decided to join us. Maybe he is another misfit, too! Oh well, from their talk about last quarter, I could tell it was a sore spot that their skit didn't go over extremely well. They kept talking about how this time it has to be funny and entertaining. I thought it a bit strange to feel such pressure at the beginning of the project. After tossing around a few ideas, I came up with the idea of having a soap opera scene interrupted with some commercials. I always think commercials can be fun and corny. So, we planned to meet to write it out first in English, and then to translate it to Korean.

### February 7

Will I ever learn? It seems like on quizzes and activities, I keep getting the same word wrong. I think it's at least the second, if not third, test this quarter where I've needed to know the word "department store" and I've not had a clue. This was a word the class learned last quarter, but that doesn't get me off the hook because we reviewed it the first night of class and I should know it by now. Especially after a quiz, if I get something wrong, the least thing I could do is focus on those mistakes and learn from them. But no, I simply go ahead and make the same mistakes over and over. I've heard as a teacher that students don't often pay too much attention to comments and corrections on homework. Even knowing that, as a student, I'm finding that I'm fitting the stereotype exactly! I hardly ever pore over my graded quiz to see what mistakes I've made. I just look at the score, wince or grin, and put it away. Because we go over the quiz directly in class, I tend to think I've done all my learning from that. But it's becoming obvious that certain vocabulary is repeated from quiz to quiz and it would help if I reviewed some of that.

I'm also starting to realize how slow my reading ability is. If we are going over something in class, I can kind of follow, but if I would have to read out loud, or just to myself even, it still takes me a long time to piece together all the sounds. We hardly do any reading practice. I have no clue where I could get some reading materials that would be at my level. There's not much in the course packet. My vocabulary is so limited that I don't even know what I would be capable of comprehending. I keep on with this notion, however, that if I could just practice reading more, then it would come more easily.

### February 10

Time is such an issue. And that frustrates me so much. Now, for class, we have to get a group project together. Which means a lot of time for what? And there's some unspoken pressure to be witty and funny and entertaining. So, I met with my group, and we wrote a stupid soap opera about a pregnancy scandal. As if it's important to learn how to say "home pregnancy kit" in another language. Not yet, at least! Depends on what nice Korean boy I meet! (Just kidding!)

I have to laugh at myself because I sound like one of my students. Cut out the fun, let's just learn! Any of this group work is wasted time!

I had the funny thought the other day that I could study more *useful* stuff if I didn't have to do these annoying homework assignments. What is the purpose of the assignments? Well, some of them are beneficial. I got my tape back from Park. She only corrected one sentence of mine for pronunciation. However, I didn't clearly understand what my mistake was. Sometimes I can't hear the correct differences between words or sounds. What surprised me about the whole experience was my shock at hearing my own voice. I know voices sound different on tape,

but I sounded shy and unsure, like the words were strange coming out of my mouth. My voice sounded higher in pitch, too, another sign to me of my shyness and uncertainty. Another note on hearing myself speak on tape was that my voice was very slow, word by word... careful enunciation. It does feel strange to hear those strange sounds come out of my mouth. Then, for listening practice, it was great of Park to speak back on the tape. So, that kind of homework is good.

But, to copy answers to a crossword puzzle 5 times doesn't really make sense to me. What are they checking? Spelling? Handwriting? See - I missed first quarter where letter and word formation might have occurred. But, I've never received any feedback regarding my writing. The quizzes, too, often seem random. I never quite know what they are testing. However, I realize, as I ramble on, that I'm focusing more on the class than on me as a language learner. Probably because I'm feeling like a failure as one! I didn't study much this weekend. Why? Well, there was a lot of other stuff to do. But also... I don't know. It might be laziness. This is a relatively new form of study, if I think about it. My dad always used to tell me I was good at studying and had good study habits. But, thinking about it, I never read all I had to read in college. My skill was simply knowing what it took to pass each class with an A, and that's what I did. A lot of my studying was "doing," active. Writing papers. Studying for a test. This language learning thing is really much more long-term, supposedly not as active, memorizing, remembering... And I really haven't gotten the knack down. I'm a lazy woman. And sometimes I just don't think I care enough! Isn't that bad?

### February 12

In Korea, there are three Valentine's Days! I thought that was so odd when I heard that. I never really understood from class exactly how widespread this practice or tradition is, if it's only with college students, etc. The men's Valentine's Day is on February 12, and women give men chocolate on this day. The women don't receive anything. No chocolate, no flowers. Not a good way to celebrate, in my opinion! Then, the women's Valentine's Day is on March 12 - and I didn't catch what happens to them. I don't remember hearing that they get chocolate on that day, either. Then, supposedly, this isn't very common, but April 12 is Valentine's Day for single people. ??? It sounded strange to me, and I wonder where it came from. Is it simply "easternization" of a "western" holiday? Or, were there other traditional holidays that kind of blended with this concept of Valentine's Day? Anyway, Park tried really hard to make her lesson communicative tonight, and I was happy for her. First, we did a dialog about Valentine's Day, which included some nice cultural information. She presented it the same way dialogs are always presented, though. First, the class repeats each line after her, and then some volunteers or unlucky called-on people have to go up to the front and read it to the class. However, again, not enough individuals were able to practice it; we never opened it up for expanded answers, etc. The only variation that occurred was when men substituted the word "girlfriend" for the original word "boyfriend."

Then, Park had prepared this nice activity about traveling on the subway. She had a map of the Seoul subway lines, with important stops marked. I didn't know enough of the basic vocabulary or expressions, however, to really be able to produce what she wanted us to produce - the asking for and giving of directions. Another thing - this vocabulary is all well and good if you're planning to travel in Seoul, but it won't stick in my head because there's not any, any reason at all to use that conversation here in Minneapolis. So...I'm starting to see how students can balk at some activities! I really need to think about what my students need and how the activities I assign them are reaching that goal.

## February 14

My group met this week to plan more about our presentation. My overall impression: I have no clue how we are actually going to do this. For one thing, I was reminded how I don't really like working in groups if I don't know the people well. You have to figure out some kind of leader, all done in a very informal manner. Kazu contributes hardly anything, and Sara talks a lot and gets off on unrelated tangents. Again, the emphasis from the "veterans" of the class was that this whole thing had to be witty and funny. Well, I was extremely bewildered, because at this point my Korean is so minimal that I wouldn't be able to write much of a skit. We went through and wrote a soap opera skit with two commercial interruptions. But many lines that were written (in English) were so beyond my ability that I started to wonder how we could translate them and how we would remember them. I'm starting to realize that not everyone knows how to study a language very well! But, I took the lead of the others that this is how it is done, and that some Korean friend will translate the script for us and it would be just fine and dandy. So, after a while I went along with it, and helped create a story about a pregnancy scandal in the family, and a toothpaste commercial. After a while I just wanted to finish the script and go home, because it took a long time. And, I reacted the way I often do in a new situation by thinking, "What do I know?" A lot of students seem to have a good grasp on Korean, so maybe they would understand it.

Another note on vocabulary learning - at the end of class last Thursday Li had some time to kill so she played what she called a "vocabulary" game. Everyone in the class had to put one of their possessions on the table in the front of the class. Students put things like lipstick, key chains, compact disks, a stapler, a pen...I put my watch up there. As I did that, I thought that the class would probably know the word for watch already, even if I didn't. Sure enough, that vocabulary had been covered last quarter. Oh well, I learned something new, at least! Anyway, Li then would question us if we knew the Korean for each object, and then she would tell us. I had to write like mad to try and remember everything. Then, she would quiz us on some stuff that she'd already mentioned. I just don't do well in situations like that. For one thing, I can never remember well only by hearing a word once or twice. I really need to write it down. And then when there are 15, 20 new words at once...let's just say I didn't keep up! But, another thing that didn't really help was my attitude! I kept thinking that these were not the most useful words to know, and that when would I ever need to use them again?

## February 19

This week has not been good. Bad, bad cold that's knocked me out. I haven't stayed home with a cold in years. Got to class on Tuesday night, feeling quite, quite miserable and tired. I felt absolutely horrid about the quiz, because I hadn't even looked at Korean at all over the weekend. I even forgot how to negate verbs, which is what we studied last class. Couldn't remember anything. And that brought on such a negative spirit that I couldn't stand it. I was mad at myself for everything. For not preparing for the quiz, for feeling like I was doing so lousy in the class, for not feeling well, for getting so busy this quarter that I couldn't stay on top of things, for not reviewing my Korean every day like I had wanted...Everything hit me at once - it was like a huge dark cloud descended on me! Such feelings of failure, and I just couldn't deal with the intensity of them. The thought of sitting through another two hours of class and having my failure and lack of comprehension rubbed in my face over and over again was absolutely unbearable. I told myself that I left early because I was really, truly sick. However, the real reason I left was because I just couldn't handle anymore that night. So, after the quiz I decided to go home. Partly because I really felt lousy but also partly because I didn't want to deal with myself.

## February 21

Yikes! I really feel like I've slipped up and fallen on my face with this class. The ESL service auction took over too much. I bombed the last quiz. I just remember that frustrated feeling, looking at the quiz paper and wanting to kick myself for not remembering what we had studied last Thursday. I didn't even crack a book all last weekend. I also was sick and just not on top of it. I am just really disappointed that I've reached this stage of the quarter and realized how little effort I am putting into this.

I'm starting to realize and experience the despair of students when I assign writing topics! From the class that I missed on Tuesday, I have to write a letter. It can be to anyone about anything. From class on Thursday, I have to write a dialog about anything. It seems like such an effort. I don't know where to begin. I don't know how to say what I want to say! And I want someone to correct all my mistakes! And yet, I've been telling students not to worry about all of that! Hmmm. What is the best way? It definitely seems different levels can/should handle different levels of correction, etc.

Without constant review I forget so much. Aaargh! Of course, I knew this, but still failed to do constant review. Flashcards get old after awhile, and they don't actually help with language use.

Last Saturday I went to "Taste of Korea." It was a fund-raiser for Korean students because of the Asian economic crisis. It was not what I expected at all. For one thing, I hardly heard any Korean spoken! That's the main reason I went. Also, there were a lot of white people involved. I guess it was intended for a white audience, so that's why everything was spoken in English. There was a dance troupe of young girls, most of them Korean adoptees. I'm glad they have a chance to learn about their culture, but it was strange for me to hear a white American mother introduce all the dances, and to know that these girls were all growing up American. The native dances, though, were beautiful. My favorite, though was the drum music. Taekwondo was another thing - mostly white teenage males running around on stage grunting and breaking wood with their feet. I don't want to get into that right now. But, for me, the funny part of the afternoon was when Sherry came up as I was eating and whispered something in Korean in my ear. My first reaction was to freeze. I understood the verb "to eat" but didn't understand anything else. And I wanted to impress her! But it didn't work. Instead, all I felt was awkward.

## February 24

Wow! This group presentation will be the death of me. I was ready to throw my group out the window yesterday. We had to have our Korean version of the group skit ready this week, so we met to compare translations. Well, for one thing, I didn't find anyone to translate the whole thing for me. I thought if everyone does that, then we'll have four Korean versions, and what good is that? So, I did meet a friend, and she helped me translate the two commercials, but that took her a long time and I felt awkward asking her. Then, when we all met together, it took forever to compare scripts. I thought it was a complete waste of time. Kazu's friend had done a really nice, short, easy version of our story. I could tell that Kazu was really worried about memorizing any long lines - which makes sense. Katie, however, had her boyfriend's translation, which was quite detailed, with added slang and phrases to make it flow better. She didn't seem to realize, however, that this could make life more difficult. I could tell she was very proud of this and excited to use it. I kept thinking that it would be impossible to memorize and most of the students in the class wouldn't understand what we were saying. That's when I begin to tune out, get angry inside, and keep asking myself what is the stupid purpose of these group projects anyway? It sure isn't helping me learn Korean. However, I sat through the whole session as Katie compared the two scripts line by line to see if there were any similar words in each sentence. Then, she wanted to see how the scripts could be combined. After a while I simply wanted to

wash my hands of the whole deal, and I became very quiet and just quietly seethed inside. This is not helping us at all.

### February 26

I don't know what was going on in class tonight, but it was just too much. This week, luckily, I'm feeling better and getting over my cold. I've also felt like I've been studying more and therefore feeling more prepared for class. But, it's a Thursday night, it's been a busy week, and I get tired. Tonight we covered about 5 new grammar points. And it was just too much. I couldn't take it all in. What happens, then, is that I get tired half-way through the class and kind of want to give up on concentrating so hard to catch every new thing. I'm not sure why Li planned it this way. When she teaches us a new grammar point, she usually writes down all this rules on the board. This actually has interested me, because I would never teach this way. She simply stops talking, turns her back to us, and starts writing. We're expected to copy it all down, and to learn it that way. She will, then, when most of us are finished writing, orally talk through it again, and that is when she'll go through examples to illustrate what we're learning. Usually, the best part of the lesson is the time spent on examples. However, these examples are usually all written examples, not spoken practice. Tonight, however, we didn't practice much of anything because we simply covered so much new material. I left, then, feeling a little cranky and in need of a weekend.

### March 2

I need to focus energy, now, on memorizing my lines for the group performance. Last Tuesday we handed in our Korean script, and I was hoping we would get feedback before we had to memorize it. I don't know what to expect, and I don't want to get input saying we need to change things that I've already started to memorize. Aaargh! It takes a lot of time, for what? I'm memorizing a commercial for toothpaste, for crying out loud! I'm not sure this will help me at all. Instead, it will be a test of memorization skills. Last night, I backed out of a practice with my group. I felt a little bad, but not bad enough. A friend called and had free tickets to the Guthrie Theater. I couldn't turn that offer down. Besides, I thought the others could practice without me. They have some main scenes together that I'm not in. So, I skipped out on them. Instead, I met with Katie for some time tonight. It's slow going to get through all the lines. We're both slow because it's hard to memorize, and because our pronunciation isn't so hot. And, it's always a weird thing to hear the "other" part of the conversation. I've spent so much time only looking at my individual lines that I get confused when I hear her part of it. And, it's really stupid because I don't know what she's saying and I never know when she's done. But, I can only handle so much new information at once, so I'm not going to worry about her lines at all. It's enough simply for me to think about mine!

### March 3

Another day of frustration with myself and Korean! The same old story - I'm so good at procrastinating studying. There is 1 1/2 weeks till the final. Hmmm...I wonder if I can stay on top of it enough to really feel ready for that. I haven't done incredibly well on the quizzes. I'm glad the pressure is off for me to not worry about A-F grades. Tonight was the last quiz, thank goodness. Tonight there was a reading section on the quiz. I've complained about not enough reading practice; well, I don't know if I can count this! Last week Li had us practice a little reading selection. However, she "gave" us the reading selection by writing it on the board first, and then we had to copy it down. So, is that legitimate "reading?" "Copying?" In class, then, she orally explained the reading and we worked together to translate it. On the quiz tonight, we had to read a dialog. There were comprehension questions in Korean, and we had to answer them

both in Korean and in English. I thought that was a little tricky. It's easy, in a sense, to pick out what part of the dialog or sentence can be used in an answer. Li also wanted to test us for comprehension. I don't think I did too badly this time. I am still a little nervous, though, for the final exam.

I have trouble still getting Korean out of my mouth. Sometimes in class we have to repeat the teacher, and I just can't read fast enough and make my mouth do what I want it to. So, I often kind of "give up" and not say certain words.

After the quiz, Park had prepared some video clips as a way to review certain grammar points from the quarter. At first, I was excited and thought this would be a great lesson. Then, however, she didn't use the video well, so it was confusing. Instead of letting us preview the entire clip, to first get a sense of the story line, she would pause and pause and pause the video to keep asking if we had caught each line. Well, I must admit that my comprehension was extremely low. But, it was hard to understand anything without context, too. She was trying to help, but her explanations were laborious. Then, she didn't often rewind to let us get the whole picture after we understood the pieces. What I did enjoy about the video was the look into Korean culture. The shows were incredibly sappy soap opera scenes. I had seen similar productions in China. They really are done differently than TV here, so there was a lot of laughter in the class. I kept hoping that Park understood the laughter somehow, and wasn't hurt or surprised by our reactions. The music was so sappy, and the acting so overdone. Also, I don't think many students had seen that before, so they were surprised, too.

### March 5

The group performance was tonight. Talk about feeling nervous. I have been saying these lines over and over in the car, as I shower, etc., trying to make them feel natural. However, there are times when I still have no clue about what I'm really saying. I know the gist, but it's just too much. The commercials I can handle. It's my last lines as the mean mother that confuse me all the time, probably because I studied those last - didn't give myself as much time to learn them. So, we met before class, but again it was frustrating because two people were late, so we only had a little time. And then, I could start to see the "competition" begin. Many groups had props, and elaborate costumes, etc. We were going to have a show. Two groups went before us. I really couldn't understand the dialog of the first group. I only caught a few words here and there. However, they had some fun stuff happen between the characters, so I could follow a little. The second group had a great idea, with a dating game set-up. So, the questions and conversations were very basic (i.e. Man Number 3, what is your favorite color?...What movie do you like?...etc.) It also was funny. I began to see how a long skit could be written with the vocabulary that the class knew. Then, our group got up. I felt okay about my part. I had the commercials memorized well, and I had made some silly pictures and props, so those were okay. I could tell, however, that people didn't really realize it was a commercial. The rest of my group didn't fare well at all, however. Sara blanked out on her lines for quite a while, and then I had to scramble to find the script to prompt her. Two of the people were so incredibly slow in their delivery. Katie tried to be so funny and dramatic, but couldn't remember her words fast enough to be effective. And, as I thought, most people didn't understand enough of what we said to follow. There were some laughs, though...maybe I'm being too hard. I just really felt like I was in the "misfit" group at that moment! As if it matters. But, after all the skits, Li stood up and mentioned a few things briefly about each one. As she came to ours, she said how we had the most new vocabulary. I mentally kicked myself for not holding out stronger against the original script that we wrote. The four of us are probably the lowest in the class, and what on earth were we doing trying to use so many new words? We had been trying to be funny, and entertaining,

of course, but that goal made us fail more!! I felt like I had been marked, too, as being in the group that is clueless about language learning.

After the performances, we played a fun numbers game that involved elimination if you made a mistake. For me, I found it a little redemptive after what I thought was a huge bomb of a skit. I was able to stay in the game till close to the end rounds. This was because of two things: one, I've always enjoyed these concentration kind of games; two, I probably wasn't chosen as much because people still simply don't know me as well and therefore wouldn't feel as comfortable pointing me out. I could tell, however, for two of the others from my group this was just more torture on top of what had already been a stressful night. I thought Sara was going to cry when we started to play the game again.

### March 7

This weekend is birthday weekend in my family. So, I am at my parents' now, and I always find it hard to study here. It means pulling myself away from everyone, and it helps if it's quiet. However, my nephews are here, and so the house isn't quiet at all. Part of me just doesn't care at this point. I want to relax after working hard for that group performance! I know the final is next week, but there's so much going on. It's been such a busy quarter even though I didn't think it would be, and right now I just want to relax with my family.

### March 10

Wow - I'm really not doing well, and it's not specifically Korean, it's all of life's stresses. So I do a lousy job of studying. Whenever I sit down to study, my mind jumps all over the place. Luckily we reviewed in class tonight, which helps me know what more to focus on. I was surprised to find out there would be a short interview as part of the exam. The questions that will be asked are some new ones for me, which is a surprise. I think these are all things that they covered fall quarter, but...I'm not sure about some of this vocabulary. Li will ask us some questions about my major, my family, what day of the week or date it is, what kind of sports I like, and what my telephone number is. I think this surprises me because this whole quarter we haven't focused at all on any of this "practical" conversation stuff. So, I'll have to find a Korean friend to help me a little with this. Li gave us all this information in English, so I need to first know how to recognize when she asks me the question in Korean! I also need to learn how to say my major in Korean. I just haven't learned that yet.


We also went through a list of about 20 sentences that Li had prepared, which demonstrated different grammar points throughout the quarter. That part of the evening was helpful. I kept scribbling down little reminders about certain vocabulary words to review. However, in the back of my mind I kept thinking that it's really too late. If I don't know these words by now, then there's a good chance that in two days I still won't know them. Either I know this stuff by now or I don't, and what I need to do before the final is review and remind myself of what I do know. During the second half of class, Li opened it up for students to ask questions. I was surprised at some of the specific questions, because I was ready to only focus on information for the final. Some students wanted to ask bizarre, little questions about aspects that I didn't think were necessary. Am I just a confident know-it-all, or again, do I have that capacity to focus on class survival skills and therefore weed out what is unnecessary information for a test? We'll see on Thursday!

### March 13

Well, I'm done with Korean for winter quarter! I have a two-week break, at least. (Still hoping to do that "catching-up" that never really happened this quarter!) What are my chances of actually studying over spring break?!?! Anyhow - I sat for 2 full hours last night writing and

reading and speaking and listening to Korean. And at the end of that time, even though I was incredibly worn out, I really did feel like I had accomplished something this quarter. I know I get awfully hard on myself. I was amazed that I was able to write, and understand as much as I did on the test. I don't really have a feel for exactly how I did, but I tried my best. I hadn't realized the test would be that long. It was many pages and took a lot of concentration. I got a little spooked on the listening part, which was much longer than any quiz we've taken. When I misunderstood one question, it was a challenge to really focus my attention right away and think about the next question. At the end of the test there was a reading section. I know I blew this. It was about buying clothes in a department store, and I just didn't know any of that vocabulary. I think students had covered this fall quarter. So, that was discouraging. But, by that point in the evening I didn't care as much. My interview went well. Li sat in an empty classroom next to ours and students had to exit one by one during the written test to talk with her. Li was very kind and asked questions quite slowly and clearly. One question she asked me was about what day it was yesterday. Well, earlier on the listening part of the final there was a question about days of the week, and for some reason I had gotten confused and translated one day wrong. So, because of my earlier confusion, I first answered Li's question wrong. Her eyes got big and she simply asked the question again. I understood my mistake, then, and so answered correctly. Then, when I went back into the classroom, I had to go back to my written answer and change that. So, my little mistake that was caught in the interview helped me get a written answer correct!

It's amazing how drained a brain can feel after two concentrated hours of trying to think in another language! I need to experience this to help me understand my students!



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