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GENDER EQUITY IN FOREIGN 
AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Cindy Brantmeier,* Jeanne Schueller,* 
and Judith A. Wilde,* and Celeste Kinginger

INTRODUCTION

Learning a foreign (FL) or a second language (L2)¹ is a complex process involving a plethora of variables, and some research indicates that gender-based differences have interacted with this process. In fact, the number of FL and L2 investigations reporting gender-based differences has increased in recent years. Despite attention to gender-related research in language learning, gender continues to be seldom examined or discussed in this field. The purpose of this chapter is to showcase data related to gender and language learning, review findings of the most concentrated areas of research, and offer directions for future studies.²

The organization of this chapter will progress in the following manner: The first section on foreign and second language learning in adults reviews research on gender and L2 learners at the high school and university levels. We examine descriptive statistics by gender related to enrollment figures in language courses, results of advanced placement examinations, and language degrees granted as a catalyst for further exploration of gender-related issues in language learning. We also review the research on gender and adult FL/L2 reading comprehension, and then we synthesize studies involving gender and adult strategy use in L2 reading. This review is followed by the research on gender, identity, and language learning abroad.

In the second part of this chapter, the focus shifts to another group of language learners, English language learners in the K–12 setting. This section includes a historical context for the discussion and then a synthesis of the research findings for English language acquisition and content area achievement, including issues of gender and language of instruction.

*The bold face names are the Lead Authors.
¹The terms “foreign language” (FL) and “second language” (L2) refer to the environment in which the language is being learned. Usually a FL is learned in a non-target language environment (such as learning Chinese in the United States), whereas an L2 is learned in a target language environment. Thus the learning of English in the United States is called English as a Second Language (ESL). Likewise, the learning of Spanish in the United States is often referred to as acquiring a second language or L2. An example of L2 is when a native English speaker is exposed to Spanish as a target language. Whereas L2 is used as a general term implying any second or foreign language being learned regardless of the target language environment, L1 refers to the native or home language.
²This chapter does not examine gender in the structure of languages. Rather, it focuses on language learning research. However it is important to note that in addition to the problems with uses of “false generics” (as in ‘Any child can grow up to be whatever he wants to be,’ which can be repaired to the gender-neutral and more inclusive plural, ‘Children can grow up to be whatever they want to be’), there are other important issues. For example, some researchers point to the problem with Spanish grammar that dictates that for a mixed-gender group, people are referred to with masculine endings—even when there are one male and 20 females present (Lee, 2001, p. xiii). Hellinger and Bussmann and the many authors in their three edited volumes (2001) look at English, French, Spanish, and many other languages, assessing the grammatical, lexical, referential, and social issues involved in an analysis of gender in languages, including address forms, idiomatic and metaphorical expressions, and expected female–male discourse patterns. As linguist Suzanne Romaine (2001) writes, “If the world is constructed and given meaning through language, then our history, philosophy, government, laws and religion are the products of a male way of perceiving and organizing the world” (p. 156). She and many other researchers suggest that male actions and values become deeply embedded in linguistic structures and practices, a critical matter for all concerned about gender equity in education and all other aspects of life.
FOREIGN AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING IN ADULTS

The following three sections provide professionals with an examination of the relationships between gender, language learning, and instruction with adult learners. The topic of gender in language learning and instruction is approached from multiple perspectives, both inside and outside the classroom. A brief background section will provide some information on the participation of women and men in foreign and second language learning in the United States. Most research in this area has emphasized reading comprehension, strategy use, and study abroad. Each research section offers a theoretical framework, a comprehensive literature review, and empirical evidence to support assertions. Finally, the section confirms that with adults, gender does matter in foreign and second language settings (Chavez, 2001, p. xv).

Participation of Women and Men in Foreign Language Learning

Since the late 1890s, enrollment of high school students in FL courses has increased steadily. By 2000, almost 7 million students in American public secondary schools (grade 7–12) were enrolled in foreign languages (Draper & Hicks, 2002). Female high school students are completing FL courses at higher rates than their male peers. In a recent report by the National Center for Education Statistics, 36% of high school females, but only 24% of males, completed three or more years of foreign languages. Among both males and females who completed three or more years in a particular language, Asian/Pacific Islanders had the highest percent of students. Hispanics and Whites tied for second, Blacks in third place, and American Indians last (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005).

Females accounted for 70% of the examinees registered for the Advanced Placement (AP) French language exam, 49% of the test population for German, approximately 50% of those signed up for the Latin AP exam, and 65% of those registered for the Spanish exam (College Board, 2006). In both 1996 and 2005 groups of college-bound seniors who took the American Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), more females than males studied foreign languages for three or more years. With the exception of the German language in 1996 and 2005 and Japanese in 2005, women comprised a higher percent of students in all languages. Men were 53% and 54% of the German language students in 1996 and 2005, and 52% of the Japanese language students in 2005. In 2005 women made up 62% of the French language students, and 55% of the Spanish language students (College Board, 1996, 2005).

According to the latest results, female students appear to be performing better than their male counterparts on most national foreign language tests. (See http://collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/exgrd_sum/2005.html). The tables show that in the five highest populated states (California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois), more females than males are registering to take the AP test, but no conclusions can be drawn from the information provided regarding their relative performance. There are instances in which females perform better than males (defined as passing with a score of 4 or 5) in certain areas of the United States and on a specific test, but the results can completely conflict with results in another area of the country and in a different foreign language.

There has been a major increase in FL students at the post-secondary level. During the 1949–1950 academic year, 4,477 students at the postsecondary level were pursuing bachelor's degrees in a modern foreign language or literature. Of those students, females accounted for more than half—reaching a total of 2,731 students. During the 2002–2003 academic year, 14,843 students were pursuing bachelor's degrees in a modern foreign language or literature. Of those students, 10,641 of them were women and 4,202 men. Of the doctoral degrees granted in the 1949–1950 academic year, males earned 135 and females 33. By 2002–2003, males earned 282 doctoral degrees and females 467. These figures show the increased participation of female students compared to their male peers in foreign languages at the postsecondary level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005).

Gender and Reading Comprehension

Before we move into an examination of research on gender, passage content, and foreign and second language reading, a brief mention of L2 reading models is essential to understand where gender fits in the reading process. Interactive models of L2 reading emphasize different components involved in the process, and most models include and highlight the importance of comprehension (Bernhardt, 1991, 2005; Coady, 1979). L2 reading researchers have defined and discussed comprehension relying heavily on Bernhardt's (1991) model (Hammadou, 1990; Wolf, 1993; Young, 2000), and they concur that comprehension is a critical component of the interplay of mechanisms involved in L2 reading. Recently, Bernhardt (2005) reports that 50% of the variance in the L2 reading model is left unaccounted for. Gender may be a factor involved in the unexplained variance.

Clearly there is a bond between the reader and the text as readers experience and respond to the text. The reader's interpretation and understanding of the content of a text is grounded in personal identity. Undeniably, a characteristic of the reader's identity is gender, and a trait of a text is the topic or content. For some time now, researchers have investigated the influence of passage content, the reader's background knowledge, and topic

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3This first section of the chapter was authored by Cindy Brantmeier, Jeanne Schueller, and Celeste Kinginger, respectively. The foreign language background information was identified by Sharon Barksdale, Feminist Majority Foundation intern from George Mason University during the Spring 2006 semester.

4As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the term L2 can refer to foreign and second languages combined or a second language learned in an environment where the target language is spoken.
familiarity\textsuperscript{5} on L2 reading with ESL students of many different instructional levels at the university. Results have consistently revealed that a student's prior subject knowledge significantly influences the understanding of L2 reading materials (Carrell, 1981, 1983a, 1983b; Hudson, 1982; James, 1987; and Johnson, 1981). A closer look at studies with participants from only intermediate and advanced levels of ESL instruction reveals that content schemata, as seen as culturally familiar and unfamiliar content, continue to influence first and second language reading comprehension (Carrell 1987; Pritchard, 1990; Steffenson et al., 1979). When ESL students are more familiar with the reading topics, they comprehend better across all levels of language instruction. As is evidenced by the aforementioned research on passage content and background knowledge, the field of L2 reading has continuously shown great concern about the cultural contexts of the learner but has given surprisingly little attention to the culture of gender.\textsuperscript{6} Are men and women\textsuperscript{7} at the university level familiar with the same topics? Prior to 2000, only a few studies had considered male–female differences in L2 reading (Chavez, 2001).

We need additional research on the following questions: How does gender interact with topic familiarity and L2 reading comprehension across stages of acquisition? Does gender play other roles in L2 reading? Patterson (1995) reviewed all of the articles published in the Reading Research Quarterly, a leading journal of first language reading research, and reported that 45% of the research designs included a description of participants in terms of gender, but only one study included gender as part of the analysis. For the present chapter, all articles in Reading Research Quarterly were reviewed from 1995 to 2004. A total of 45 articles described participants in terms of gender, but it appeared that only six included gender as a factor in the analysis. This deficiency in reading investigations conducted in classroom situations may lead readers to believe that gender does not play a role in the reading process. On the contrary, researchers have examined gender and passage content on first language (L1) standardized exams and found that gender is an important factor in the reading process (Doolittle & Welch, 1989; Hyde & Linn, 1988; Silverstein, 2001). Indeed, in the communication skills chapter in this Handbook, the authors report that across recent studies, gender differences in reading are small. However, those authors also point out that in the United States, direct instruction in reading comprehension is generally limited to the first three elementary grades; they also note that individual, family, and societal factors need to be considered along with gender when doing reading research.

First language reading research concerning standardized exams has revealed intriguing insights that may be connected to L2 reading issues. Hyde and Lynn (1988) reported lower performance by females on the language part of the SAT (American Scholastic Attitude Test) and attributed this to the content of the readings of the test (technical material that is covered in physics and chemistry classes). Doolittle and Welch (1989) reported no overall performance differences by women on the reading sections of a standardized exam, but when they examined performance on specific passages, they found that females scored higher than males on humanities-oriented readings whereas males outperformed their female counterparts on passages with science-oriented topics. In her book on gender in the L2 classroom, Chavez (2001) suggests that topics of personal relevance in reading comprehension tests may affect male and female performance. Empirical investigations on L2 reading support the assertion that topics of text affect male and female reading achievement. Table 15.1 lists a summary of selected L2 investigations that consider readers' gender and comprehension across instructional levels with adults. The following discussion offers a brief review of relevant studies. See Brantmeier (2006) for more details.

With the national foreign language examination in the Netherlands, Buggel and Buunk (1996) found that males scored significantly better than females on the multiple choice comprehension items for essays concerning laser thermometers, volcanoes, cars, and football players, and females achieved significantly higher scores on the comprehension tests for essays on text topics such as midwives, a sad story, and a housewife's dilemma. They concluded that the topic of a text is an important factor in explaining gender-based differences in second language reading comprehension.

Contrary to Buggel and Buunk (1996), Young and Oxford (1997) reported no significant differences by gender with recall scores for all text topics (economics, presence of foreign cultures, and history), and there were no self-reported differences by gender in the familiarity ratings with passage topics or background knowledge of any of the passages. Moreover, there were no overall significant differences by gender in the use of global versus local strategies, with a few specific exceptions: males monitored their reading pace and paraphrased more often than females with the Spanish passages, and females solved vocabulary problems more often than males while reading the texts.

With students studying German, Schueller (1999) controlled for the effects of passage content and reported a higher degree of reading comprehension among females. She used readings that were equally familiar to both men and women. Her study was the first to examine gender as a variable when looking at the effects of top-down and bottom-up reading strategies instruction on the comprehension of literary texts. She found that males and females profit in similar ways from bottom-up and top-down strategy training. More specifically, every female group scored higher on comprehension than the male groups.

\textsuperscript{5}Researchers in applied linguistics have used the terms background knowledge and topic familiarity interchangeably. However, research by Alexander, Kuliowich, and Jetton (1995) has shown that these two factors are separate phenomena. A measure of background knowledge tests existing knowledge, and a test of topic familiarity often consists of self-reported questionnaires with rated familiarity items.

\textsuperscript{6}Belcher (2001) offers a discussion about gender as a factor in research on L2 writing.

\textsuperscript{7}Firth and Wagner (1997) contend that second language acquisition (SLA) research often sees participants in binary terms (male and female) and that researchers often ignore the social and contextual dimensions of language (p. 288). In the present article, gender is the label under which other forces emerge (Chavez, 2001).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Reading Passages</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bügel & Buunk 1996                                                    | High school students in the Netherlands who had 3 or more years of English as a foreign language.                                          | 11 passages:  
   "Female" topics:  
   (1) human relations  
   (2) female professions  
   (3) self care and care of others  
   (4) home, cooking  
   (5) art, literature, dance  
   (6) pity  
   (7) philosophy  
   "Male" topics:  
   (1) economy, money  
   (2) politics  
   (3) crime, war, violence  
   (4) sports  
   (5) machines, physics  
   (6) automobiles                                                                 | Females did significantly better on reading passages about human relations, education, care, art, and philosophy; males did significantly better on politics, sports, violence, economics, and technological topics. |
| Young & Oxford 1997                                                   | Intermediate Spanish at the University level.                                 | Passages taken from textbooks on the following topics: economics, presence of foreign cultures, and historyancia.                                                                                          | No significant differences by gender with recall scores for all text topics. No self-reported differences by gender in the familiarity ratings with passage topics or background knowledge of any of the passages. |
| Schueller 1999                                                        | Participants from second-year courses of German at the university level.      | Passages were gender-neutral narratives (borne out by statistical analyses).                                                                                                                                     | Schueller controlled for the effects of passage content and reported a higher degree of reading comprehension among females. More specifically, every female group scored higher on comprehension than the male groups regardless of strategic training and comprehension assessment task with only one exception: males with top-down (overall textual gist) strategy training did better than females on multiple choice (but not on recall). |
| Brantmeier 2002                                                       | 132 total; 76 Advanced Grammar (11 males; 65 females); 56 Advanced Literature (9 males; 47 females).                                    | Cortázar passage on boxing; Poniatowska passage on housewife; topic familiarity questionnaire; written recall and multiple choice questions.                                                               | Effects of passage content on L2 reading comprehension by gender do not maintain at higher levels of instruction; significant topic familiarity differences do maintain.                     |
| Brantmeier 2003a                                                      | 78 total (29 males, 49 females). Hispanic culture course (intermediate level; course beyond first two years of Spanish).                  | Cortázar passage on boxing; Poniatowska passage on housewife; topic familiarity questionnaire; written recall and multiple choice questions.                                                               | Reported significant topic familiarity differences by gender; passage content affects L2 reading comprehension by gender (for both multiple choice and recall).                                      |
| Brantmeier 2003b                                                      | 78 total, (29 males, 49 females) from third year Hispanic culture course; fifth semester students of Spanish.                           | Cortázar passage on boxing; Poniatowska passage on housewife; written recall and multiple choice questions. Questionnaire on global and local strategies.                                                            | Although findings of the present study indicated that men use more top-down strategies than women when faced with the Cortázar passage, results revealed that strategy use did not significantly correlate with performance on comprehension tasks. Type of strategy use did not predict comprehension at the intermediate level. |

(continued)
TABLE 15.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Reading Passages</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brantmeier 2003c</td>
<td>70 Costa Rican students studying EFL in Costa Rica, (27 males, 43 females).</td>
<td>Cortázar passage on boxing; Poniatowska passage on housewife; written recall and multiple choice questions; questionnaire on global and local strategies.</td>
<td>No gender differences in topic familiarity were reported. Results revealed significant main effects of female-oriented passage content by reader’s gender on recall only. Costa Rican females outperformed their counterparts on recall for the Poniatowska passage, but they did not differ from males on recall scores for the Cortázar passage. No gender differences were found with strategy use, but results revealed a significant relationship between global strategy use and both comprehension tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brantmeier 2003d</td>
<td>86 students (34 males, 52 females) enrolled in intermediate Spanish.</td>
<td>Cortázar passage on boxing; Poniatowska passage on housewife; written recall.</td>
<td>Males indicated they know more about the boxing passage, and they showed greater interest in and enjoyment of this passage. Similar results were found for the females with regard to the female passage. Males performed better than females on recall for the boxing passage, and females performed better than males on recall for the housewife passage. Lack of topic familiarity interfered with recall, but low levels of enjoyment and interest factors did not hinder performance on recalls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brantmeier 2004a</td>
<td>68 students enrolled in advanced Spanish grammar courses.</td>
<td>Short stories by Horacio Quiroga, &quot;The Decapitated Chicken&quot; (DC), and Julio Cortázar, &quot;Slaughter at Naptime&quot; (SN); written recall and multiple choice questions; topic familiarity questionnaire.</td>
<td>Men and women reported being equally familiar with both text topics. Results revealed no significant main effects of readers’ gender and topic familiarity with both passages. Performance by males and females on the recall comprehension task and multiple choice questions was significantly affected by the interaction of DC passage content and readers’ gender. For the DC passage, females scored higher than the males on the recall task and multiple choice questions.</td>
</tr>
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*This figure appeared in Brantmeier (2006) and is modified and reproduced here by permission of the author.

regardless of strategic training and comprehension assessment task with only one exception: males with top-down strategy training did better than females on multiple choice questions (but not on recall). Details concerning strategy use are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Brantmeier (2002) reported no significant gender differences in comprehension of two different passages with learners of Spanish at the advanced stages of acquisition. However, using the same reading passages, Brantmeier (2003a) reported significant interactions between readers’ gender and passage content with comprehension among intermediate L2 learners of Spanish. Overall results indicated better performance by females on both recall scores and multiple choice questions. With participants from both the advanced grammar classes and literature courses, females achieved higher recall scores across passages than males. However, for the advanced levels, mean scores for multiple choice items across passages were the same for women and men. Brantmeier concluded that these findings may suggest that as learners advance in their language studies, differences between men and women in reading comprehension may depend on assessment tasks, such as recall and multiple choice, used to measure comprehension, rather than on passage content. Using the same reading passages but without focusing on comprehension, Brantmeier (2003b) reported that with readers at the intermediate level, there are no significant gender differences in strategy use when reading an L2, even though there are topic familiarity differences by gender. Brantmeier concluded that successful second language reading comprehension depends on a variety of factors, and with students from the intermediate courses of Spanish, important interacting

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*Reading passages were taken from materials commonly used at these levels of Spanish language instruction. Brantmeier does not propose that male and female comprehension differences exist. Rather, the issue concerns male–female topic familiarity. Topic familiarity differences by gender were borne out statistically. There were no significant degrees of variation in topic familiarity levels within gender groups.
factors to be considered are readers’ gender, passage content, topic familiarity, and assessment tasks.

With first language (L1) readers, Brantmeier (2003c) utilized the same reading passages and comprehension assessment tasks as Brantmeier (2002, 2003a) to determine whether comprehension is affected by passage content, and whether gender plays a role in native readers’ strategy use. More specifically, Brantmeier (2003c) investigated whether gender differences by text topic will disappear with L1 readers of Spanish as they did with advanced L2 readers of Spanish (Brantmeier, 2002). The participants in the study were 70 adult (age 22–30) native Spanish speakers (27 men; 43 women) studying intermediate level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in San José, Costa Rica. Results revealed no significant differences by gender for reported topic familiarity; however, with a passage about a housewife, results revealed significant main effects by gender on the recall assessment task. Females recalled more than males for this passage. No gender differences were found with strategy use. The findings echoed those in previous research that revealed higher achievement by females on L1 literacy tests with specific passage topics and with a writing task as a measure of comprehension.

To explore additional individual differences in L2 reading with learners from the intermediate levels of Spanish, Brantmeier (2003d) examined the effects of male and female self-reported levels of enjoyment, interest, and topic familiarity on written recalls. The outcome of males showing higher comprehension of a boxing passage and females showing higher comprehension of the female-oriented passage was only partially explained by the predicted variables. Enjoyment and interest mattered little at this level. Reading for meaning was hindered by a lack of topic familiarity, but not by the other individual difference variables.

More recently, Brantmeier (2004a) was interested in utilizing passages that yielded no topic familiarity differences by gender to examine male–female differences in scores with two comprehension tasks. She examined the topic familiarity levels and comprehension of advanced university-level male and female L2 readers with two different authentic violence-oriented texts of 700 words each. The results of this study showed that while male and female readers at the advanced levels of instruction indicated being equally familiar with violence-oriented content of the target culture, females outscored their male counterparts on L2 comprehension tasks (both multiple choice and recall) for the de-capitated chicken (DC) text, which involved male-to-female violence. The overall results echo previous findings by Brantmeier where females may have an advantage over males in the free written recall procedure. Though the results provide support for a model of L2 reading that includes many variables (Bernhardt, 1991), one cannot assert that the apparent gender differences in the comprehension of the passage involving violence is actually due to the sex of the story’s victim. Consequently, Brantmeier asserted that future research should further examine this issue.

With adults at various levels of language acquisition, some of the aforementioned L2 reading studies examined whether gender interacts with other variables to account for differences in the reading processes (strategies) and product (comprehension measured via various tasks). In the past, variations in research design and methods, especially regarding level of instruction and passage type, made it difficult to offer generalizations about L2 reading and gender (Brantmeier, 2001). For example, Bügel and Buunk (1996) utilized more advanced participants and the passages were essays; Young and Oxford’s (1997) participants were from the intermediate level and the passages were essays taken from textbooks; Schueller (1999) used participants from second-year courses and the passages were gender-neutral narratives; Brantmeier’s (2002; 2003a; 2003b; 2003c; 2004a) participants were from intermediate and advanced levels and the passages were authentic vignettes from short stories. Given the inconsistencies in research methods and procedures, it comes as no surprise that the results are somewhat disparate. However, the studies show how gender can be an important variable in L2 reading research.

**Strategies Used in Foreign and Second Language Learning**

Most recent research on gender and strategy use has focused on reading comprehension and processing of written texts. Consequently, this research should continue in order to achieve clear conclusions regarding gender and strategy use. Below we use the current body of research to:

1. provide a synthesis of previous research on learning strategies;
2. point out limitations of that research;
3. call attention to individual differences, such as the variety of proficiency levels, target languages, definitions of strategies, and research design; and
4. highlight future areas of research and pedagogical implications.

Cohen (1998) defines language learning and language use strategies as “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” (p. 4). He goes on to explain that these strategies encompass both language learning and language use (p. 5). The strategies can be broken down into four categories depending on how they are used and are illustrated in Table 15.2 based on Cohen (1998, pp. 7–8).

Learning styles also have been linked to L2 strategy use. One style preference that is particularly relevant in studies dealing with gender is global (or top-down) versus local (or bottom-up) processing of ideas. Global strategies focus on the “big picture” and include, for example, using background knowledge, brainstorming, skimming for an overview or gist, guessing meaning from context, and integrating new and old information. Local strategies deal with details and include focusing on linguistic elements and grammatical structures; dissecting words and phrases morphologically, syntactically, or phonetically; decoding meaning by using dictionaries, L1 cognates, or

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8Cohen admits that whether or not learning strategies are consciously selected is controversial but argues that it is this element of awareness that "distinguishes strategies from those processes that are not strategic" (p. 4).
9See Cohen (1998) for a more complete description of other subsets of language learning and language use strategies.
grammatical categories; and translating from the I.1 into the L2 (Schueller, 2004). Some basic trends have been found in how males and females use or report using L2 strategies. First, females tend to report using more overall strategies and using them more frequently than males (Young & Oxford, 1997). Second, most, though not all, studies have found that females rely more frequently on global strategies than males, who are more likely to use local strategies (Bacon, 1992; Bacon & Finnemann, 1992; Young & Oxford, 1997). Third, female learners utilize more social strategies than males (Politzer, 1983). In their state-of-the-art review of research on gender differences in strategy use, Young and Oxford (1997) found eleven studies dealing with gender differences in strategy use of nonnative speakers of English. Their review summarized in Table 15.3, which supplies the most up-to-date summary of the research on this topic prior to 1997, appears to support the above claims.

Nearly all of the studies found that females used more strategies than males. One study showed that females make use of more global and males local strategies (in this case for listening comprehension) (Bacon & Finnemann, 1990) but none showed the reverse, i.e., that females used more local strategies. Several studies indicate that females were more often associated with social strategies than males (Bacon & Finnemann, 1990; Oxford et al., 1993; Oxford et al., 1996; Politzer, 1983). In the following section, we review studies that have appeared since Young and Oxford (1997). Table 15.4 shows a summary of investigations on L2 strategy use and gender including relevant research questions, participants, and results, and results.

The nine studies summarized in Table 15.4, all appearing between 1997 and 2005, seem to have found fewer significant differences overall in gender and strategy use than the eleven studies reported on by Young and Oxford (Table 15.3) that all appeared between 1983 and 1996. Although the findings vary, some trends emerge. When significant differences between females and males were found, females outperformed males (Schueller, 2004), and females report using certain strategies more than males (El-Dib, 2004; Khalil, 2005), including cognitive and metacognitive (Woodrow, 2005). These findings are consistent with those summarized in Fig. 15.3.

Several of these studies used an instrument called the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to assess strategy use. While self-report instruments such as the SILL have been used in scores of studies around the world, it is unclear whether males and females are equally able to assess their own strategy use or are even reliable in doing so. In fact, it may be the case that learners who employ more strategies may in turn be more aware of their strategy use. Barnett (1988) found a correlation between the two and states that “as strategy use increases, student perception of strategy use also increases” (p. 156).

Some researchers offer reasons why females and males differ in performance. Schueller (2004) considers several reasons why, with few exceptions, the females in her study outperformed the males. She proposes that females may have done better on the recall task because of its global nature and cites earlier research such as Oxford (1993), which suggests that females are more global learners and males more analytical learners, and Chavez (2001), who speculates that female students may be more inclined to please the teacher than are the male students. For example, females may have deliberately written more on the recall task and therefore scored higher on that reading comprehension assessment measure. El-Dib (2004), whose study took place in Kuwait, suggests that the “cultural milieu . . . determined the types of strategies used by either sex” (p. 93).

Despite obvious variability in the findings reported on here and in Young and Oxford (1997), certain pedagogical implications can be drawn based on the studies outlined above. There seems to be a consensus that promoting awareness and understanding of how strategies work and how to apply them appropriately will enhance student learning of the L2. Many of the researchers reported on here (Brantmeier, 2003b; Khalil, 2005; Kocoglu, 1997; Schmals, 2003; Schueller, 2004; Young & Oxford, 1997) suggest a similar course of action for classroom instruction: explicit strategy instruction. This sentiment is shared by Cohen (1998), who recommends that “explicitly describing, discussing, and reinforcing strategies in the classroom—and thus raising them to the level of conscious awareness—can have a direct payoff on student outcomes” (p. 19).

However, as Cohen (1998) points out, there is nothing intrinsically effective about any given strategy, and that selecting successful strategies depends on the task, individual learner differences, and language proficiency. Strategy training should "explicitly teach students how, when, and why strategies can be used to facilitate their efforts at learning and using a foreign language" (p. 69). In addition, strategy instruction should "help students explore ways that they can learn the target language more effectively, as well as to encourage students to self-evaluate and self-direct their learning" (p. 69). Learners need to first become aware of the strategies already in their repertoire and then add to these so they can pick and choose depending on what they are trying to accomplish. Cohen reports on how strategy training has been implemented in a classroom setting, workshops, peer tutoring, language textbooks, and videotaped mini-courses. Table 15.5 outlines one step-by-step approach for implementing explicit in-class strategy training discussed by Cohen (1998, pp. 72-73.)

The author does not claim that this review summary is exhaustive but rather is a representative sample of available research.
TABLE 15.3 Gender Differences in Strategy of Native Speakers of English Learning Other Languages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Languages Learned</th>
<th>Strategies Females Used More Than Males</th>
<th>Strategies Males Used More Than Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politzer (1983)</td>
<td>French, German, Spanish</td>
<td>Social strategies</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehrman and Oxford (1989)</td>
<td>Many</td>
<td>General study strategies</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategies for meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-management strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Functional practice strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford and Nyikos (1989)</td>
<td>French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish</td>
<td>Formal rule-based strategies</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General study strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conversational input-elicitation strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyikos (1987)</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>After training; Color-only memory strategies</td>
<td>After training; Color plus picture memory strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affective strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildner-Bassett (1992)</td>
<td>German, Russian, Spanish</td>
<td>Compensation strategies</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon and Finnemann (1990)</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Global listening strategies</td>
<td>Local listening strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Making friends with Spanish speaker (social strategy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon (1992)</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies</td>
<td>Linear processing strategies; reference to native language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive strategies; (used formulaically)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brecht, Davidson, and Ginsberg (1990)</td>
<td>Russian (in Russia)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Social strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affective strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning conjugations</td>
<td>Learning from various activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning grammar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning from context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Specific strategies:</td>
<td>Specific strategies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Using color-coded cards for gender,</td>
<td>Concentrating more on oral communication than structures,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>using pink/blue for gender, using other colors for gender, using flash cards, using organized lists, accepting rules at face value, reviewing textbook material</td>
<td>being impeded by not knowing the meaning of a word (neg.); not comparing and accepting rules as a separate system (neg.); looking for the general meaning, idea, or theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford et al. (1996)</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Strategy types:</td>
<td>Strategy types:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive strategies</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Memory strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social strategies</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affective strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Specific strategies:</td>
<td>Specific strategies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trying out new vocabulary learning strategies</td>
<td>Thinking about my progress; judging success of a given strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This figure appeared in Young and Oxford (1997, pp. 50–52) and is reproduced here by permission of the authors.

Gender, Identity, and Language Learning Abroad

The study abroad context is viewed by many U.S. foreign language professionals as the quintessential learning experience in which students have unlimited access to the kinds of activity that promote the development of communicative competence. Confidence in the study abroad experience is such that one university recently abolished its home curriculum in foreign languages in favor of systematic sojourns abroad for students (Schneider, 2001). However, systematic research has yet to demonstrate universal effectiveness of study abroad for language learning. Rather, findings of empirical studies point to the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Research Questions (Related to Gender and Strategy Use)</th>
<th>Participants/Procedure</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young &amp; Oxford (1997) A gender-related analysis of strategies used to process written input in the native language and a foreign language</td>
<td>1. Are there significant differences in the types of strategies male and female learners use to process FL and LI texts? 2. Are there significant differences in FL and LI recall scores between males and females?</td>
<td>49 native-English-speaking students (26 females; 23 males) ranking from first- to fourth-year Spanish. Students read 3 passages (2 in TL, 1 in LI) based on level. Subjects participated in think-aloud protocols and a reading recall task for each passage. There were three different text types: TL-edited, TL-authentic, and LI.</td>
<td>Q1: No difference in mean use of strategy by gender. Females tended to use global strategies more often than males, though not significantly more. Some strategies were used more often by males (monitoring pace and reading behavior and paraphrasing) and some by females (solving vocabulary problems and acknowledging lack of background knowledge). Q2: No significant differences in recall scores by gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kocoglu (1997) The role of gender on communication strategy use</td>
<td>Are there similarities and/or differences between male vs. female Turkish EFL learners in the use of communication strategies (CSs) while interacting with NS of the TL?</td>
<td>Turkish learners of English were paired with NS of English to form 20 dyads (10 same-sex and 10 opposite-sex pairs).</td>
<td>All subjects used more CSs when interacting with female rather than male NSs of English. Author suggests that the former were more &quot;cooperative and more encouraging in conversations than the latter&quot; (p. 4). Thus, the gender of the interlocutor is more important than the gender of the student in this study on CSs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shmais (2003) Language learning strategy use in Palestine</td>
<td>Is there a significant difference in strategy use due to gender among Arab EFL majors?</td>
<td>19 males and 80 females enrolled as English majors at a university in Palestine. All subjects had studied TL formally for 8 years. To measure students’ self-perception of themselves as learners, students were asked to report on their actual progress in English (GPA) and to rate themselves on a scale of 1–3 to indicate how successful they thought they were at listening, reading, writing, and speaking the TL (1 = very good, 2 = good, 3 = poor). The SILL (in the LI) was used to measure strategy use.</td>
<td>No main effect for gender on strategy use was found.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brantmeier (2003b) The role of gender and strategy use in processing authentic written input at the intermediate level</td>
<td>Are there gender differences in readers’ overall global and local strategy use with two L2 authentic texts at the intermediate level of language instruction?</td>
<td>78 participants (29 men and 49 women) in a fifth-semester Spanish course. All were NSs of English and had not studied abroad. Subjects read two glossed passages, completed a written recall and MC task, reported their degree of familiarity with the topic, and filled out a strategy-use questionnaire.</td>
<td>No significant gender differences were found in the number of global and local strategies that participants used to process the two texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schueller (2004) Gender and foreign language reading comprehension: The effects of strategy training</td>
<td>Do males and females benefit similarly in different types of prereading strategy training? And do differences in strategic benefits linked to gender vary by proficiency level?</td>
<td>128 university students (78 females and 50 males) enrolled in a second-year German course were divided into two treatment groups (prereading training in either top-down or bottom-up strategies) and a control group. In the treatment groups, prereading</td>
<td>The interaction of treatment by gender was not significant. There were no significant differences between males’ and females’ mean recall and MC scores within each treatment group. But significant gender differences in performance showed that females outperformed males on both tasks regardless of treatment except on the MC test.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Research Questions (Related to Gender and Strategy Use)</th>
<th>Participants/Procedure</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schueller (2004) (continued)</td>
<td>instruction consisted of one training session. Following the treatment, subjects read a text and completed an immediate recall protocol and a MC test.</td>
<td>Males with top-down training scored higher on the MC test than all other groups (male and female) and males in the control group outperformed females in the control group on the MC test.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El-Dib (2004) Language learning strategies in Kuwait: Links to gender, language level, and culture in a hybrid context</td>
<td>Is there a significant difference between gender and the factors identified (i.e., those that explain variability) on the SILL?</td>
<td>504 college students (260 females and 244 males) in Kuwait completed the SILL.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khalil (2005) Assessment of language learning strategies used by Palestinian EFL learners</td>
<td>Do language proficiency level and gender affect strategy use among Palestinian EFL learners?</td>
<td>378 high school and university students (194 females, 184 males) completed the SILL.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nisbet, Tindall, &amp; Arroyo (2005) Language learning strategies and English proficiency of Chinese university students</td>
<td>Is there a difference in learning strategy preference and proficiency by gender?</td>
<td>168 third-year English majors (139 females, 29 males) in China completed the SILL.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodrow (2005) The challenge of measuring language learning strategies</td>
<td>Is there a significant effect of gender on strategy use? (The study’s main research goals were to assess the usefulness, reliability, and validity of the instrument.)</td>
<td>249 (137 females, 112 males) English-for-academic-purposes students in Australia completed a 20-item Likert-scale survey based on Schmidt and Watanabe (2001).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note the following abbreviations: target language (TL), native language (L1), native speaker (NS), Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), communication strategies (CS), multiple choice (MC).*

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**TABLE 15.5** Explicit In-Class Strategy Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Have them discuss how they did it, praise any useful strategies and self-directed attitudes they mention, and ask them to reflect on how the strategies they selected may have facilitated the learning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Suggest and demonstrate other helpful strategies, mentioning the need for greater self-direction and expected benefits, and ensure that the students are aware of the rationale for strategy use. Learners can also be asked to identify those strategies they do not currently use and consider ways they could include new strategies in their learning repertoires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Allow learners plenty of time to practice the new strategies with language tasks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Show how the strategies can be transferred to other tasks,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Provide practice using the techniques with new tasks and allow learners to make choices about the strategies they will use to complete the learning task,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Help students understand how to evaluate the success of their strategy use and how to gauge their progress as more responsible and self-directed learners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
significance of individual differences in a variety of contexts and learning situations (e.g., Freed, 1995; Huebner, 1995; Marriott, 1995) or suggest that language development in study abroad may be less dramatic than anticipated (Hoffman-Hicks, 2001).

Gender-related effects, while widely acknowledged, have received relatively little systematic attention. An important exception is Polanyi's (1995) narrative study of language learner journals, a study complementing the findings of a research project in which gender was determined to be a major factor predicting gain scores on the Oral Proficiency Interview (a standard test of speaking ability) by American sojourners in Russia (Brecht et al., 1995). In this statistically robust study involving 686 subjects, male gender was shown to offer a significant advantage in learning to speak Russian. Polanyi's analysis of learners' stories revealed that stories of men's experience often highlighted situations in which the participants were framed as competent participants in communicative settings well before they actually were able to participate, or situations in which their needs were anticipated and met without need of discussion. The women, on the other hand, rarely were set up to participate actively in social interaction and recounted stories of recurrent and unwanted interactions with Russians. These women perceived many of their encounters with Russians as sexist in nature or as constituting harassment; their access to language learning opportunities was limited correspondingly.

Another example is found among the earliest qualitative studies of second language acquisition (SLA) in John and Francine Schumann's inauguration of the "diary study" (Schumann & Schumann, 1977) based on narrative documentation of their experiences as language learners abroad. The focus of the initial publication of this work was the discovery of what the Schumanns then termed "personal variables," or individual characteristics that would intervene among more robust social and psychological factors such as social distance, language dominance patterns, attitude, or motivation to determine the outcomes of SLA. Subsequently, Francine Schumann published a re-analysis of her diary focusing explicitly upon the identity-related aspects of her attempts to learn Farsi in Iran as a female Peace Corps participant (Schumann, 1980). In this article, F. Schumann turns away from the neutral positivism of the earlier writing, in which the language learner is equated with a gender-neutral pinball tracing a pathway through a machine studded with variables (Schumann & Schumann, 1977, p. 248). Instead, she examines the difficulties she encountered in gaining access to language learning as a foreign woman, citing the negative attitudes of the expatriate community toward their host community and the desirability of interaction in English, her native language. Most significant is the fact that many of the interactive settings required for language learning were not available to women and that no attention to this reality was given in the Peace Corps predeparture training sessions at the time of Schumann's participation.

I've come to believe after keeping a language journal that the task of learning the language of a country like Iran is far greater an endeavor for a woman than for a man. In order to learn a language, one must practice it and be immersed in it, ideally in the target culture. There the opportunities abound for the language student. No one ever informed the female language learner that in any given daily contact situation in Iran a good many of these opportunities are "off bounds." (Schumann, 1980, p. 55)

Attempts to understand the qualities of the study abroad experience thus have come to complement studies emphasizing its demonstrable impact on language competence. Wilkinson (1998), for example, designed an ethnographic study to investigate what kinds of interactions influenced learning of French in France. While interpreting her results, she stresses the complexity of the setting:

...the immersion context, far from the protective environment of a language lab, is a complex, multidimensional setting where verbal communication holds significant, yet often invisible, cultural and social meanings, in addition to the literal denotations which students are already trained in the classroom to recognize. (p. 132)

Analysis of the study abroad setting, according to Wilkinson, must take into account both the types of contact the students develop and also their reactions to and perceptions of these contacts. Given the ubiquity of gender and gendered identities in the shaping of social relations, it follows that, within the literature on study abroad, gender often emerges as a defining characteristic of the experience.

Table 15.6 summarizes seven studies investigating gender issues in study abroad programs. Two studies have focused on the effects of public displays of behavior perceived as sexist. Twombly (1995) conducted a study based on interviews and focus group discussions with students conducted upon arrival and after 4.5 months in various programs situated in Costa Rica. Interpretation of these data centers on two strongly emergent themes. First, the young American women involved in the study initially were quite perturbed by the practice of "piroporing," or catcalling in the street, because they felt targeted by this practice both for their gender and for their status as foreigners. "The results of our interviews suggest that for many of the students we interviewed and observed, at least the first four months of the sojourn in the foreign country were not an immersion experience, but an alienating experience in which gender played a major role. To compound the situation, those responsible for study abroad programs were not fully aware of this 'gender dynamic' for female students" (Twombly, 1995, p. 2). Second, women in the programs reported that it was much more difficult for them to make female friends rather than male friends, due in part to differences in university-related institutional cultures and gender roles in the United States and in Costa Rica. Although the report on the study does not detail the preparation that these students received, the author recommends explicit treatment of gender-related issues both in orientation programs and in courses taking place during the study abroad sojourn.

Talburt and Stewart (1999) undertook an ethnographic study of a summer program in Spain, exploring the relationship between students' formal and informal experiences for an entire cohort. Students in the group came prepared with a minimum of two years of Spanish study and enrolled in a course designed to guide them as observers of culture through training in ethnography and practice in focused observation. Within this context, their attention was drawn persistently to the plight of Mishela, the only African American student on the program, whose experience was marked by "hypervisibility" in that she was subjected to continuous and humiliating emphasis on race.
TABLE 15.6 Summary of Studies Investigating Gender in Study Abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Method/Major Focus</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schumann, F. (1980)</td>
<td>The author, learning Arabic and Farsi in Tunisia and Iran as an adult Peace Corps volunteer</td>
<td>Diary study attempting to pinpoint personal variables influencing second language acquisition</td>
<td>Access to language learning opportunities may be limited by female gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polanyi (1995)</td>
<td>Participants in a large-scale study of language development in Russia</td>
<td>Narrative study of learner journals, focusing on stories of gendered experience</td>
<td>Women report failure to achieve access to learning opportunities in social interaction, and sexual harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twombly (1995)</td>
<td>Undergraduate participants in various study abroad programs in Costa Rica</td>
<td>Interviews, focus group discussions with content analysis of emergent themes</td>
<td>Women in the program are disturbed by the practice of &quot;piropos,&quot; find it difficult to make female friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talburt and Stewart (1999)</td>
<td>A focal participant (Misheila) in a group of 35 undergraduate students in a short-term program in Spain</td>
<td>Ethnographic account of the relationship between student experiences in and out of class</td>
<td>Race and gender become salient to the participant and to her classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siegal (1996)</td>
<td>One focal participant in a study of professional women learning Japanese in Japan</td>
<td>Case history including conversation analysis of interactions involving power imbalance</td>
<td>The observation of native speaking norms for the performance of gender in Japanese conflicts with the learner’s core identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kline (1998)</td>
<td>A cohort of students in a study abroad program in France</td>
<td>Ethnography of literacy as social practice</td>
<td>Following perceived sexual harassment, female participants take refuge in literacy and in the American group’s hybrid subculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churchill (2005)</td>
<td>A male focal participant, Masa, in a group of Japanese learners of English on a short-term study abroad program in the U.S.</td>
<td>The influence of gender as social practice on the learning of English</td>
<td>Masa’s male gender contributed to a more favorable environment for development of oral proficiency at home and in school than that of his female classmates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and sexuality in her interactions with Spaniards. In Misheila’s words (translated from her Spanish):

For me while I have been in Spain I notice that the African woman is a symbol of sexuality. When I walk in the streets I receive comments on my skin and sexual comments. . . . It’s very difficult for me and I don’t think it is something cultural, it is an ignorant mind. When they make comments to me I feel that they’re taking advantage of me being different and not having command of the language. And I don’t like it. (p. 169)

The researchers offer a close analysis of an in-class discussion where Misheila’s negative appraisal of the situation is analyzed by students and their instructor, demonstrating the potential for development of critical thinking about race and gender within an embodied cultural curriculum where race and gender are problematized explicitly and used as a fulcrum for cultural understanding.

Siegal (1996) presents a case study focusing on the role of learner subjectivity in the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence by European women learning Japanese in Japan. The study, part of a longer ethnographic project, examines the conflict concerning sociolinguistic appropriateness experienced by one learner in conversation with her professor, where unequal power and positionality exert influence upon the quality of the interaction. Although she did understand the pragmatics of appropriate demeanor for a woman in Japanese society, in attempting to craft a voice for herself as a professional woman in Japanese, the student manipulated honorifics, modality, and topical control in ways that sometimes resulted in inappropriate language use. The study emphasizes the conflict inherent in this learner’s need to honor her interlocutor through appropriate behavior yet to maintain “face” as a professional woman. Siegal’s study is representative of the profession’s burning interest in the interface of language use and identity at advanced levels of proficiency, where second language resources for the performance of identity may conflict with learners’ desired presentation of self, a conflict that can engender learner resistance to native speaking norms both within and across learning contexts (DuFon, 2000; Ishihara, 2003; Kinginger, 2004a; Ogulnick, 1998; see also Kramsch, 1997 on the “privilege of the non-native speaker” to adopt or decline native-like behaviors).

A study by Kline (1998) examined literacy practices among American students studying in France. In her study, the female participants also encountered behavior they perceived as sexist or humiliating, opting, for example, to take refuge in literacy at the expense of attempts to develop social networks outside their own American “hybrid subculture.”

Finally, Churchill (2005) provides a case study examining the experience of gendered language learning by a male Japanese high school student (“Masa”) in a short-term study abroad pro-
gram in the United States. Masa's minority status as one of four men in a class of 47 students contributed to his isolation and academic difficulties at home, but in the study abroad context this status was turned to his advantage. Not only did he enjoy placement as the only study abroad student in his host family (in contrast to the females who were placed in groups), a situation that afforded significant opportunity to interact in English, but he also was welcomed immediately into peer group activities, such as the cross-country team, where he was able to profit from a network of peers and corresponding interactive resources. Assessment of Masa's oral proficiency at the end of the program is compared with that of a female participant with a similar predeparture profile. This assessment, along with the qualitative findings, supports the overall assessment of study abroad as a relatively favorable environment for the development of speaking skill by male learners.

Language Learning, Narrative, and Transformation of Gendered Identities in Study Abroad

The unacknowledged issue in the study abroad literature is that additional language learning inevitably involves exposure to new identity-related resources. New gender ideologies and performances may present conflict with the old. For adult learners, when the array of gender-related resources developed in the first language does not translate easily into the second, the adult learners must first understand the nuanced meanings invoked and then choose how to proceed and whether, or to what extent, they shall adopt these new resources as their own. Pavlenko (2001) illustrates how transformation of gendered identities is played out in the cross-cultural life writing of immigrants and sojourners abroad. Beginning with the assertion that gendered identities are social and cultural constructs, she argues the case for cross-cultural differences in normative masculinities and femininities. Gendered styles are produced in speech communities, and individuals produce themselves as gendered subjects through accommodation to these styles. Although gender performance in a particular society is not predetermined, a limited range of gendered subjectivities is validated in a given society at a given moment. Thus, "a transition to a different culture, a different society, may involve change in how one views and performs gender" (Pavlenko, 2001, p. 135).

Through careful exegesis of language learning memoirs, Pavlenko illustrates how border crossers encounter, celebrate, and resist ideologies of gender. Those who choose to assimilate may experience this transition as liberation from oppressive childhood socialization or as a painful process of self-translation in which previous closely held identities are lost.

Gender, Language Socialization, and Ideology in Study Abroad

Contemporary work on the role of gender in study abroad therefore takes a broad view of gender as one aspect in the lifelong process of language socialization and views the study abroad experience as a time of choice, when learners are exposed to the gender-related identity options and challenges associated with advanced competence in their second language, and when investment in language learning is either furthered and enhanced or withdrawn (Norton, 2000; Pavlenko, 2002).

Kinginger examined the cases of two women whose learning of French are exceptional: "Alice," who overcame extraordinary social obstacles to her learning of the language in study abroad; and Nancy Huston, who grew up in Anglophone Canada yet has become a celebrated French language writer. Alice (Kinginger, 2004a), a young working-class woman from a migrant family in the southeastern United States, initially associated learning the French language with higher class values and experiences, as reflected in the American media and textbook industry's portrayal of France as a place where consumption of refined, elite products takes place in an ambiance of cultured gentility. In addition, however, her drive to learn was fueled by personal aspirations: to overcome fatalism and self-deprecation and to turn her past experiences of impermanence and transience on their head and make of them a virtue. After a struggle to enter a university-sponsored study abroad program, Alice was confronted with the reality of daily life in France as an American woman whose only option for practice in speaking French was "to let old, drunk French men buy her drinks." Alice suffered a severe bout of depression before aligning her motives in concert with her new surroundings, fighting for access to conversations in French, and ultimately gaining the ability to appreciate and to participate in acts of sociopolitical critique.

The case of the French–English bilingual writer Nancy Huston (Kinginger, 2004b) also offers an illustration of the ways in which foreign language learning offers an attractive potential for the performance of new and different emotional selves. Although she grew up in western Canada, Huston is now a celebrated French-language writer, with over 25 major works to her credit. In her autobiographical works, Huston repeatedly praised her second language not only for its civilizing influence upon her subjectivity but also for the feeling of unlimited exoticism she derives from self-expression in French and the access to literary creativity she derived from this medium. Huston claims to have used French as an escape route from the boredom of her childhood, a drab world of Anglo-Saxon propriety set on a backdrop of rugged western pursuits involving rodeos and cheap beer, from which she was buoyed away by French—and the French feminist movement—into an adulthood of refinement, autonomy, self-esteem, and creative satisfaction.

A more recent project examines the mediating role of identity, including gender and gender-related ideologies, in the language socialization of 23 American undergraduates spending a semester in France during the spring semester of 2003. Employing a hybrid methodology, the study examines both qualitative data in the form of journals and interviews, and outcomes on formal assessments of gain in academic proficiency and awareness of sociolinguistic variation in French. In the design of assessments, the intent of the study is to discover how learners'

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12This research is supported by CALPER (Center for Advanced Proficiency Education and Research), a National Foreign Language Resource Center (United States Department of Education, CFDA 84.229, P229A020010-03). However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and one should not assume endorsement by the federal government.
access to a range of social settings and networks "in the field" impacts their knowledge of both formal and informal language use.

Kinginger and Whitworth (2005) explore three individual case histories resulting from this project. These case studies reveal that gender, as a key aspect of identity, plays a significant role not only in the qualities of access to learning opportunities reported in the narrative data but also in the interpretation that learners bring to these events and, ultimately, in the development of their language competence. As in the case of the Polanyi (1995) study cited above, young men's accounts of their experience tend to be relatively gender neutral and include scenes in which their language competence is explicitly fostered through assisted performance by well-meaning others. "Bill," for example, entered the study abroad context as a beginning learner of French and reports a broad array of formal and informal encounters in which his use of French is actively assisted and encouraged. His test results show dramatic gains in both academic and informal varieties of the language. Women's accounts, however, include numerous references to gender as embodiment (Gergen, 2001), to the objectification of women, and to sexual harassment. "Deirdre," for example, experienced an increasing sense of alienation from French society due in part to her perception of gender-based discrimination and public harassment, ultimately limiting her informal interactions in French to strictly utilitarian service encounters. Her test results show little gain in academic French (including a drop in her reading score) and only a modest improvement in her awareness of informal usage.

Neither Bill nor Deirdre appear to have questioned their own conceptions of gender or its performance during this experience; for Bill, few challenges were presented whereas for Deirdre the challenges were overwhelming. Transformation of gendered identity, in Pavlenko's sense of the term, does develop into an issue, however, in the cases of young women such as "Jada," who retain an investment in language learning and who retain an investment in language learning and choose to craft a gendered identity appropriate for the new context. Although she initially took refuge in the hybrid subculture of American participants in the program (Kline, 1998), for Jada this process involved close observation of the strategies of female expert users of French, strategies that would permit her to seize control of interactions and thereby further her goal of engaging in learning opportunities. In other words, her socialization as a user of French passed through an initial stage of reflection and accommodation to local gendered norms. If Jada's gain scores on the test of formal and informal French are modest, it may be because of the challenges she encountered in the initial phases of her experience.

Achieving Equity in Study Abroad Programs for Language Learning

Clearly, the study abroad context poses considerable challenges for the project of achieving gender equity in educational settings. When learners sojourn abroad, they discover different ways of understanding and performing gender, many of which may conflict with the norms of American society, including, of course, the very desirability of gender equity itself. Meanwhile, in the United States materials for language learning, tests and other assessments and programs to prepare students for the study abroad experience remain fixed on the goal of generalizability, a comfortable neutrality centered on the "one" standard learner (the white, middle-class male), critiqued in strong terms by Polanyi in the conclusion to her 1995 study:

That impersonal "one" who "needs to know" or "learns a language" is the issue. Who "one" is is a factor of one's native talent for language learning, one's educational background and motivation but it is also a product of one's gender, one's class, one's race, one's sexual orientation, one's health and degree of ableness. Ultimately, every language learner is alone with a unique experience, an experience tailored to, by and for that individual. (p. 287)

At the very least, the studies examining gendered identity and study abroad suggest that this aspect of the experience be recognized and acknowledged. Ideally, students would be informed about the norms governing performance of gender in the societies they are studying, and the gender-related challenges to language learning that their predecessors have encountered and recounted in their stories would be shared, discussed, and subjected to critical assessment.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE K–12 SETTING

The focus of this section of the chapter is on gender differences in language acquisition and content achievement among second language learners in the K–12 school setting. These students often are referred to as learning L2 (English, usually their second language); whether, and to what extent, they maintain L1 (their first, or home, language) is more controversial. Although there is research that explores best practices for these English language learners (ELL), there is a dearth of research that includes gender as a variable of consequence.

The following sections provide an overview of the current status of research in the field of educating ELL students. To understand the challenges more fully, we first provide a brief historical context for the discussion, including a description of students now being served by bilingual English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, and then a synthesis of the research findings for English language acquisition and content area achievement, including issues of gender and language of instruction.

Historical Context

Although it is not the purpose of this section to detail the history or current practices of bilingual education in the United States, an overview of both provides a context for understanding the discussion of gender-related issues. The majority of this

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13This second section of the chapter was authored by Judith A. Wilde.
section will provide a synthesis of the research that considers gender differences among ELL students and within ELL student achievement. As we will see, the area is one in great need of research. Although it is fairly common for the numbers of male and female students to be specified, it is uncommon for researchers to analyze the results by sex.

The founders of the United States chose to adopt neither “an official language nor a government-sanctioned body to regulate speech” (Crawford, 1999, p. 22). At that time, the most common languages in the United States came from northern Europe as well as from 250 to 1,000 American Indian language groups. Although some states published official documents in languages other than English, Congress refused to do so, and although some states authorized bilingual education, others mandated English-only instruction (Ovando, 2003).

During the 19th century, immigrants formed communities that actively maintained their languages, religions, and cultures. Today’s remnants of these communities are in cities that have a “Little Korea” or a “Chinatown,” such as South Philadelphia with its distinctly Italian flavor or Boston’s Irish reputation.

In 1900, 4% of the nation’s children were German-speaking, the largest non-English speaking group in the country. In addition, 9 states taught students in German, Scandinavian languages were used to teach students from those countries in eight states, and Spanish was used in southwestern states because of the large number of students from Mexico and Central America (Kloss, 1998). Still today, New Mexico is a constitutionally bilingual state, requiring Spanish-English education and translation of official documents.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked a distinct change in policies. Two sets of policies marked repressive changes: (a) a restrictive Indian language policy was designed to “civilize” American Indians and, for military reasons, to contain them on reservations and (b) combining anti-Catholic sentiment with a fear of “foreigners” speaking another language, English-only laws were passed and focused on the largest non-English speaking group in the country—Germans. With World War I, the hostility against Germans increased and caused the United States to push for monolingualism; even teaching German as a FL was eliminated from most school districts. As described by Ovando, the “push for homogeneity became a well-established pattern within schools during the first half of the 20th century. . . . World War II served as the first wake-up call regarding the United States’ inadequacies in foreign-language instruction. Because language, math, and science skills were essential for military, commercial, and diplomatic endeavors, these subjects became a high priority in the national defense agenda during the cold war period” (2003, pp. 5, 7).

While courses in foreign language, math, and science were added to many high school curricula, they had little effect on female students, much less ELLs or female ELL students. Even with the need for individuals with a good command of a second language, ELL students still were encouraged to replace L1 with English, and native English-speakers were encouraged to add a FL to their knowledge of English. The only real exceptions were the Navajo Code Talkers of World War II, all males serving in the military.

Language education within the United States became one of “subtractive bilingualism” in which a student’s home language is “removed” and replaced with English. Canadians and Europeans have maintained a standard of “additive bilingualism” in which another language or languages are added to the student’s knowledge base, enhancing school achievement as well as L1 literacy skills (Gómez, 1990; Thomas & Collier, 1997).

The first federal legislation that addressed the education of native-born and immigrant ELL students was in 1968, when the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) was passed as part of President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty. This was the first official federal recognition of the needs of ELL students (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). Congress knew that ELL children faced “serious learning difficulties” in English-only classrooms and believed that this created “a unique and perplexing educational situation” (PL 90-247, §701). Shortly thereafter, the Lau v. Nichols case was filed as a class-action suit against the San Francisco school district on behalf of 1,800 Chinese students denied an equal education because of their limited English skills. Ultimately, the Supreme Court ruled that merely offering the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curricula do not constitute an equal education for all children. These two events, the BEA and Lau v. Nichols, sparked a major and ongoing battle over the “best” way to teach students who come to school speaking a language other than English.

Instructional Approaches for ELLs

The first BEA (which was reauthorized for the sixth time within the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) was purely experimental; research in educating ELL children was just beginning. The purpose of the BEA was to provide financial assistance, on a competitive grant basis, to develop “new and imaginative elementary and secondary school programs to meet these special educational needs” (§702).

Since that time, three general approaches to teaching ELL students have been developed: (a) ESL approaches that focus on teaching students in English as they learn both academic content and English language proficiency; (b) transitional bilingual approaches that begin by teaching students academic content in L1 and gradually transition them into all-English class-
rooms; and (c) dual language immersion approaches, whose goal is to develop bilingualism (i.e., full proficiency in two languages) in two student groups—native L1 speakers and native L2 speakers learning together. Figure 15.1 more fully defines these approaches and some of their permutations, grouped into those that focus on teaching in two languages and those that focus on teaching in one language.

Research on these approaches has led to general agreement among proponents of bilingual education that the longer students remain in classes that support their home language, the greater their ultimate proficiency in English as well as their achievement in academic content areas. In this context, full two-way immersion approaches generally are the most effective for students, though most difficult to implement (c.f., Crawford, 1997a; Krashen, 1991; Lindholm-Leary, 2005a; Ramírez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991; Slavin & Cheung, 2003; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002). Among opponents of bilingual education, true bilingual education only serves to encourage students’ use of L1, does not enhance their academic achievement, and slows their learning of English (c.f., Baker, 1990, 1992; Crawford, 1997b; Krashen, 1991). However, there are caveats to some of the research on both sides of the issue—especially when viewed in light of the preference for true experimental research found within the current No Child Left Behind Act.

Some recent data indicate that there are no overall differences among these approaches but that differences are more situation- and context-specific (e.g., Parrish, Merickel, Pérez, Inquanti, & Socías, 2006). These researchers studied student achievement in California since the passage of Proposition 227. Analyzing data from about 1.5 million ELL students and 3.5 million English-fluent students, they found no overall differences in academic performance across educational approaches for ELL students but did note that “limitations in statewide data make it impossible to definitively resolve the long-standing debate underlying Proposition 227” (p. III-1). They also indicated that the probability of an ELL student gaining full English proficiency after 10 years in California schools was less than 40 percent. They did not analyze the data for gender differences.

**Student Demographics**

It is estimated that there are approximately 5.1 million ELL students in grades K–12 in the United States (Padolsky, 2005) who speak over 400 languages, including at least 137 American Indian languages (Crawford, 1997a). About 40% of these students are in California with Texas, Illinois, New York, and Florida also having large populations of ELLs. Spanish is the predominant language of these students, spoken by about 75% of them. Other high frequency languages include (with highest numbers first) Vietnamese, Hmong, Korean, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Cantonese, Tagalog, Russian, and Navajo (Hopstock & Stephenson, 2003).

While many people think of ELL students as immigrants, the majority are citizens, born in the United States. For instance, in Arizona, a state with many ELL students and sharing a border with Mexico, 72% of Spanish-speaking elementary school ELLs are U.S. citizens, and 94% of ELL children under the age of five are U.S. citizens (García, 2005). Nationally, it is estimated that 80% of ELL students are U.S. citizens (Urban Institute, 2006).

**K–12 ELL Students’ English Language Proficiency**

Federal law requires that the English language proficiency of ELLs be assessed each year until they are deemed proficient in English. English language proficiency is a separate construct from English language arts achievement or English reading achievement; the assessments for each are different. All ELLs are tested for identification when they enter a school system, and all ELLs must be assessed each year to determine their progress in attaining English language proficiency. Data from California’s English language proficiency test are provided here because the large number of students tested allows a more accurate view of ELL students as a whole.

In California, the assessment used is the state-developed California English Language Development Test (CELDT), an individually administered assessment that has been used since 2001–2002. The data from the first five administrations are available but only for specific groups of students, not for individual students. Thus analyzing data for significant or important differences in not possible, but looking for observable patterns in those data is possible.

The data below are for students who have been in California schools for at least 12 months and are quasi-longitudinal because there is no assurance that the same students reported upon in 2001–2 remained in California schools in 2005–6. Students are identified by 2001–2 grade level. In 2001–2 there were about 601,000 girls tested and about 567,000 boys tested; in 2005–6 the number tested had increased to about 619,000 girls and 707,000 boys.

Scaled scores are reported for the CELDT. The CELDT provides separate scores for English listening/speaking, reading, and writing skills; in keeping with reading data reported for adult FL learners earlier, Figs. 15.2 and 15.3 provide reading skill scores for ELL students.

These two figures clearly show a variability in scores within a generally linear pattern. In 2001–2, girls appeared to have somewhat higher reading skills than boys, but five years later the gap across grades was somewhat less although girls maintained their advantage at each grade level—these probably would be significant due to sample size. The patterns for both girls and boys are similar for those who were in grades 3 through 8 in 2001–2. The greatest growth was in that first year (2001–2 to 2002–3) with growth decreasing with age. However, the boys who were in 2nd grade in 2001–2 appear to have had

13Proposition 227, endorsed by voters in 1998, strongly supports an English immersion model in which ELL students are taught in English with minimal L1 support. Analyses by Parrish et al., included statewide student-level data from 1997–98 to 2003–4 as well as data gathered in the Los Angeles Unified School District from 1997–98 to 2002–3.

14Scaled scores are a form of standardized scores that range from 200 to 800, with an average of 500.
All language instruction educational programs have as goals the development of proficiency in English and academic achievement. The differences among them lie in their linguistic goals: (a) proficiency in one language (English) or two (English and one other) and (b) whether and to what extent the native language is used to deliver content, particularly as students develop English.

Programs that focus on developing literacy in two languages include:

- **Two-way immersion or two-way bilingual**
  - The goal is to develop strong skills and proficiency in both L1 (home language) and L2 (English)
  - Includes students with an English background and students from one other language background
  - Instruction is in both languages, typically starting with smaller proportions of instruction in English and gradually moving to half in each language
  - Students typically stay in the program throughout elementary school

- **Dual language**
  - When called “dual language immersion,” usually the same as two-way immersion or two-way bilingual
  - When called “dual language,” may refer to students from one language group developing full literacy skills in two languages—L1 and English

- **Late exit transitional, developmental bilingual, or maintenance education**
  - The goal is to develop some skills and proficiency in L1 and strong skills and proficiency in L2 (English)
  - Instruction at lower grades is in L1, gradually transitioning to English; students typically transition into mainstream classrooms with their English-speaking peers
  - Differences among the three programs focus on the degree of literacy students develop in the home language (L1)

- **Early exit transitional**
  - The goal is to develop English skills as quickly as possible, without delaying learning of academic core content
  - Instruction begins in L1, but rapidly moves to English; students typically are transitioned into mainstream classrooms with their English-speaking peers as soon as possible

- **Heritage language or indigenous language program**
  - The goal is literacy in two languages
  - Content taught in both languages, with teachers fluent in both languages
  - Differences between the two programs: heritage language programs typically target students who are non–English speakers or who have weak literacy skills in L1; indigenous language programs support endangered minority languages in which students may have weak receptive and no productive skills—both programs often serve American Indian students

Programs that focus on developing literacy only in English include:

- **Sheltered English, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), or Content-based English as a Second Language (ESL)**
  - The goal is proficiency in English while learning content in an all-English setting
  - Students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds can be in the same classroom
  - Instruction is adapted to students’ proficiency level and supplemented by gestures, visual aids, and so on
  - May be used with other methods; e.g., early exit may use home language for some classes and SDAIE for others

- **Sheltered English, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), Content-based English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)**
  - The goal is fluency in English, with only ELL students in the class
  - All instruction is in English, adjusted to the proficiency level of students so subject matter is comprehensible
  - Teachers need receptive skill in students’ L1 and sheltered instructional techniques

- **English language development (ELD) or ESL Pull-out**
  - The goal is fluency in English
  - Students leave their mainstream classroom to spend part of the day receiving ESL instruction, often focused on grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills, not academic content
  - There is typically no support for students’ L1

Note: Modified from work by Linguanti (1999) and Zelasko & Antunez (2000).

FIGURE 15.1. Title IX Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities for Local School Districts
achievement gap to close or narrow, ELL students must demonstrate more academic growth than their average English-speaking peers each year, and for several years. Proponents of bilingual education report that the strongest predictor of student achievement in L2 (English) is the amount of formal schooling in L1 (home language) (e.g., Thomas & Collier, 2002). Perhaps as a result of low achievement scores and concomitant low English proficiency skills, ELL students' reported dropout rates are well above 40% (Alva & Padilla, 1995; Padrón & Waxman, 1992). Furthermore, Hispanics born outside the United States, have dropout rates as high as 44% (Institute for Education Statistics, 2002). Boys' dropout rates usually are higher than girls' dropout rates.

K–12 ELL Student Achievement

Nearly all research on bilingual education has attempted to determine which of two or more instructional approaches has resulted in higher content area achievement or English language proficiency scores for ELL students (see, for instance, Parrish et al., 2006 or Thomas & Collier, 2002). Background variables often studied include language background, socioeconomic status (SES), schooling in the native country, and home language. If gender is mentioned, it generally is as a descriptor of students, not as a variable to be analyzed.

This section is divided into research that focuses on reading and language arts, research that focuses on math and science, and research on more generalized academic achievement as measured by standardized tests. Reviews of literature are synthesized first, then specific research studies. Unless otherwise indicated, results mentioned are either statistically significant or have large effect sizes. Unfortunately, these data point again to the paucity of research that includes gender as a variable of interest.

Reading and Language Arts Achievement

Padrón (1992) reviewed the literature to find that elementary-aged ELL students reading in their L2 (i.e., English) use fewer strategies and different types of reading strategies than English-monomilingual students and that mature readers and female students are more likely to use a variety of cognitive strategies when reading. She also added that there has been little research examining the effects of cognitive strategy instruction on the strategies that ELL students use in reading text that is written in English. This finding may be because higher-level thinking skills generally are not taught until students have become proficient in English; many educators assume that students are not able to comprehend such strategies until they can use the language well. She did not report differences in cognitive strategies based on gender. Slavin and Cheung (2003) synthesized studies of beginning readers that used true experimental designs.

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\[\text{NCEs are normal curve equivalents, a normalized score ranging from 1 to 99, with an average of 50 and a standard deviation of 21.06. When NCEs remain the same from one year to the next (growth = 0), then students have gained what they were expected to in that one year of school. When NCE's increase, then students have learned more than expected for a single school year. For more information, see Wilde & Sockey, 1995 or Wilde, 2004b.}\]
While they did not identify gender differences, apparently because none were analyzed, they did find that the research largely supported the use of L1, particularly in two-way immersion approaches.

The following examples of individual studies that included gender analysis point out some of the complexities of this research and the inconsistencies of the results.

In a study of Spanish-speaking students in true bilingual classrooms in grades 1 through 8 of a large urban school district in Arizona, Medina (1993) found that girls scored significantly higher than boys in reading, as measured by a test of reading in Spanish.

In a large (N = 3,089) two-year study of K–12 students, about 25% of whom were Southeast Asian and American Indian ELL students, Hallam (2001) did not find gender differences in reading but did find them in writing at the high school level; he also found differences with Hispanic, American Indian, and older Asian American students as well as students living in poverty scoring significantly lower in reading and writing than White and noneconomically disadvantaged students. This last finding is supported by a secondary analysis of previously published data by Krashen and Brown (2005). They found that high-SES ELL students performed about as well on tests of reading in English as did low-SES students fluent in English. We may be able to hypothesize that Hispanic and American Indian females who live in poverty have lower scores, but these data generally have not been analyzed by researchers.

Math/Science Achievement

Padrón and Waxman, in their 1992 review of the literature on math and science, also focused on linguistically and culturally diverse students and at-risk students. They pointed to much literature reporting “what is wrong” with the education of these students: (a) emphasizing basic skills only, to the exclusion of higher cognitive skills and higher-order thinking skills—for ELL students, this means that they will not be taught such skills until they master English; (b) differing teacher expectations and treatment of at-risk students—for ELL students, this means a focus on remediation, drill-and-practice content repetition, and questions related only to low-level knowledge; (c) focusing classroom order on teacher-centered instruction—for ELL students, this means less effective instruction because they tend to respond better to student-centered inquiry models; and (d) ignoring cultural differences—for ELL students this means instruction that does not meet their cultural and educational needs. Krashen and Brown (2005) also included math in their secondary analyses of previously published data. In this case, they found that high-SES ELL students clearly outperformed low-SES fluent English proficient students on tests of math achievement.

Medina’s study of Spanish-speaking students in true bilingual classes also analyzed data for math and science. No gender differences were found in math or science among students in grades 2 through 8, as measured by a Spanish-language test (1993).

Academic Achievement

Wilde (2006) currently is studying programs for ELL students in a large East Coast school district. Individual middle school and high school student data are available for the state-mandated annual assessments of reading, grammar, listening, and math and a state-mandated English language proficiency test that measures reading, writing, speaking, and listening, as well as a state-mandated test of achievement in reading, writing, math, and science. The results of each test are reported in different types of scores. For the years 2003–4 and 2004–5, Wilde analyzed data for over 2,000 ELL students. Factors analysed included school level (middle school or high school), English proficiency, ethnic/racial group, and gender. In no analysis of any of the test scores was gender a significant factor—neither alone nor in an interaction. There were differences in some analyses based on the English proficiency of students, on the ethnic/racial group of students, and on interactions of English proficiency and ethnic/racial group.

Davenport et al. (2002), used the Minnesota Basic Skills Test (BST) to report on the achievement of 8th grade students in years 1996–2001 (a series of cross-sectional analyses based on 51,923 to 65,913 students each year). Since 1998 the BST has been used to satisfy the high school graduation requirement; students who do not score at least 75% correct on the test in 8th grade have opportunities in grades 9 through 12 to retake the test. In secondary analyses, NAEP data were used to confirm the results of the BST. Results are disaggregated by gender, five ethnic groups, ELL/non-ELL, and SES, among others; unfortunately, the researchers do not analyze interactions (more specifically, gender by English proficiency). Davenport and his co-authors first report on an overall analysis indicating that average math scores have remained consistently around 80% correct whereas reading scores have gradually risen from about 72% correct in 1996 to 83% correct in 2001 (p. 8). The researchers found that there were consistently more males than females tested. Results of interest to the current work include those listed in Fig. 15.4.

In the largest study of ELL education to date, and one of the few longitudinal studies based on archival data, Thomas and Collie (2002) reported on data collected from 1996 to 2001, with 210,054 ELL students in grades K–12, from 16 urban and rural research sites in 11 states and speaking more than 80 different languages. The dependent variables for the analyses of these data were nationally standardized tests of achievement using NCE scores. The first portion of the study looked at ELL students’ long-term achievement in English total reading scores to measure academic problem solving across the curriculum, using tests such as the ITBS, CTBS, Stanford 9, and Terra Nova. These
Gender differences in reading favored females and have remained about the same across the years of the study; gender differences in math initially favored males but have decreased across time.

- Analyses of NAEP data showed larger differences favoring females in reading and males in math; these differences did not appear to change over time. No gender differences were found in any of the tests for any content area or the problem-solving total reading subtest.

ELL students do less well in both reading and math than either non-ELL students whose home language is not English (i.e., a student whose home language is not English but who is proficient enough in English to participate in mainstream classrooms) or non-ELL students whose home language is English. While the researchers report that the differences between ELL and non-ELL are narrowing, they also indicate that the rising scores appear to be "real performance gains" for reading, but for math may be an effect of changes in classifying students—regardless, the rate of decrease is small.

- ELL students scored relatively lower in reading than in math. Furthermore, there was a hierarchy to the scores of the three groups with nonELL/English home language students scoring highest, non-ELL/other home language group scoring about 7 to 8 percentage points lower, and the ELL group scoring a further 12 to 15 percentage points lower.

ELL students with individual education plans (IEPs) were compared to students who were neither ELL nor had IEPs. The differences in both reading and math were the largest reported in the study (approximately 2.5 standard deviations).

There was a hierarchy to these scores as well. English fluent students in mainstream classrooms (non-ELL/non-IEP students) scored 80% correct or better in both math and reading; ELL students in regular bilingual/ESL classrooms (ELL/non-IEP students) scored next, with English fluent students in Resource classrooms (non-ELL/IEP students) scoring third in the group, and the ELL students in Resource classrooms (ELL/IEP students) generally getting less than half of the answers correct.

Analyses based on ethnicity show that initially only white students and Asian students passed the BST in math and initially only white students passed the BST in reading although Asians began passing reading in 2000. Looking at the scores more generally, the highest scores are achieved by white students, who score consistently higher in both reading and math than (in descending order of average scores) Asians, American Indians, Hispanics, and African Americans.

- NAEP scores showed similar, though less extreme, differences among the ethnic/racial groups.

Finally, students living in poverty scored much lower in both reading and math than students who were not economically disadvantaged. Indeed, these differences appear to be increasing.

- NAEP results are consistent with these findings.

FIGURE 15.4. Summary of Analyses of the Minnesota Basic Skills Test and NAEP Data from Davenport et al., 2002.
schools were achieving at significantly higher levels. The final analytical samples were composed of 1,672 students from the 20 SFA treatment schools and 1,618 students from the 18 control schools, each of which included about 50% female students. However, gender was not analyzed and was reported only to demonstrate the equal distribution of students by gender, ELL status, and special education status.

The second instructional model, recently developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), is an approach for standardizing the ESL “sheltered instruction” approach for ELL students in English-medium classrooms. Over seven years, CAL collaborated with practicing teachers and researchers from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) to develop the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and accompanying instructional model and professional development activities. Research has shown that the SIOP model is effective with both ELL and English-fluent students (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). However, again, there is no mention of the gender of the students or whether there are gender differences.

Summary

An overview of the findings from the few studies identified and reviewed for this section is presented in Table 15.7. As can be seen, the results support the oft-found findings of studies with monolingual English-speakers in the United States: There is some female advantage in reading and language arts and male advantage in math and science. However, we should not be so bold as to generalize these results to all language groups and all cultures without specifically studying reading and language arts, math, and science in more language groups and more cultures — and including those variables interacting with gender within the analyses.

In one of the few examples of a culture-gender interaction, a language arts curriculum was designed for Hawaiian native students at the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP). It was found that the students preferred to learn in same-sex dyads. When the program was moved to the Navajo Reservation, many aspects had to be tailored to Navajo culture — including that students preferred to learn in small peer groups (Tharp & Yamauchi, 1994). (Also see the chapters on gender equity among Asians and Latinos and Latinas.)

What are we to conclude from these various research studies? First, there is a distinct lack of research that looks at gender and ELL status, gender and ethnicity, gender and culture, or gender and poverty status. And, because ELL status, poverty status, culture, and ethnicity are highly related (students who speak a language other than English tend to be ethnic minorities, poor, and from minority cultures), we have little basis on which to make conclusions about any of these variable combinations. However, we can hypothesize that the female side of each interaction (the female × ELL, female × minority ethnicity, female × poverty, and female × culturally diverse status) will have lower achievement than the female × majority status group (i.e., English speaking, White, nondisadvantaged, and majority culture). When looking at the male side of the equation, we might be able to hypothesize that females will have higher achievement than males in reading and language arts but lower achievement in math and science. Some of the few studies identified that analyzed this combination did report these findings, but there are too few studies to be conclusive.

Second, if we are to identify the “best” instructional techniques for ELL students, we also must consider the gender, language background, culture, poverty, and educational background of ELL students. Equity issues are far-ranging and often especially important for this group of students. We cannot look at ELL students only through the lens of middle-class “American” values. Rather, we must respect the culture of the students, the interaction of gender and culture, language background, and the interaction between language and culture. It is perhaps among ELL students that these issues are the most difficult to describe and the least likely to have been studied.

It is important to note, also, the effect that the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is having on research about ELL students. With its focus on scientifically-based research, grants funded by the U.S. Department of Education study two-way bilingual immersion programs and ESL-type programs. Several of these grants have been awarded to the Center for Applied Linguistics and Johns Hopkins University (either together or separately) with most funded for 3 to 5 years beginning in 2001–2003. Although some papers have been presented at national conferences, little has been finalized and reviewed by the Department of Education for publication purposes. Although required scientifically-based research does suggest that gender be included and analyzed, it is unclear whether it actually is being considered within these studies. However, it is clear that students are being randomly selected and randomly assigned to treatment conditions. It will be interesting to follow these studies and see the eventual findings.

CHAPTER SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides an overview of the research summarized in this chapter on L2 learning for both adults (primarily learning a “foreign” language) and K–12 students (learning English as a second language in American schools). In addition, we provide some interpretative comments and recommendations for both researchers and practitioners. Although we have tried to stay within the confines of the research that has been presented, we also have tried to create suggestions and recommendations that are somewhat provocative and might stimulate further discussion and research ideas. Because many of the findings for adults learning a “foreign” language and K–12 students learning English are similar, we will only indicate an age group where necessary because of differences.

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21For more information on the development of, and research about, SIOP see www.cal.org/crede/si.htm.
22All chapter authors contributed to this section of the chapter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Language Groups</th>
<th>Grade Level/Age</th>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Findings*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Studies that included and analyzed gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Davenport et al. (2002)</td>
<td>Spanish-speaking</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>• F &gt; M*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Poverty &lt; nonpoverty</td>
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<td>• F ELL &gt; M ELL</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• F ELL in poverty &lt; most others</td>
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<td>• F &gt; M*</td>
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<td>• ELL &lt; nonELL</td>
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<td>• Hisp. Amer Ind &lt; Asian, white</td>
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<td>• Poverty &lt; nonpoverty</td>
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<td>• F ELL&gt;M ELL</td>
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<td>• F ELL in poverty &lt; most others</td>
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<td>• F &lt; M*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hallam (2001)</td>
<td>ELL: SE Asian, American Indian, Non-ELL: Asian</td>
<td>K–12</td>
<td>Reading in English</td>
<td>• F = M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic, American, Hispanic, White</td>
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<td>Writing in English</td>
<td>• 9–12 grade F &gt; 9–12 grade M</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Poverty and nonpoverty</td>
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<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>• Hispanic, American Indian, older Asian</td>
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<td>• Hispanic, poverty &lt; White, nonpoverty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Hispanic, American Indian F &lt; any others</td>
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<td>Medina (1993)</td>
<td>Spanish-speaking ELLs</td>
<td>Grades 1–8</td>
<td>Spanish reading</td>
<td>• F &gt; M</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grades 2–8</td>
<td>Spanish math, science</td>
<td>• F = M</td>
</tr>
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<td>Padrón (1992)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown, but in</td>
<td>Reading in English</td>
<td>• Not analyzed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature review</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>school</td>
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<td>Unknown, but in</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Krashen and Brown (2009)</td>
<td>Multiple languages including English-fluent; high-</td>
<td>Multiple, in school</td>
<td>Reading and math</td>
<td>• High SES ELLs = low SES English fluent in reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Secondary analysis of published data)</td>
<td>and low-socioeconomic status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• High SES ELLs &gt; low SES English fluent in math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas and Collier (2002)</td>
<td>Spanish-speaking, English-speaking, and over 80</td>
<td>K–12, longitudinal</td>
<td>Math in English</td>
<td>• Hispanic F &lt; Hispanic M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>others</td>
<td></td>
<td>Science in English</td>
<td>• Hispanic F &lt; Hispanic M</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading in English</td>
<td>• F = M</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Math in Spanish</td>
<td>• F = M</td>
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<td>Math in Spanish</td>
<td>• F = M</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading in English</td>
<td>• F = M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilde (2006)</td>
<td>Over 100 languages, but primarily Spanish</td>
<td>2 years of middle school and high school students; over 2,000 students</td>
<td>English language proficiency (various measures of reading, writing, listing, speaking)</td>
<td>• F = M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Higher Eng proficiency &gt; lower Eng proficiency</td>
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<td>• F = M</td>
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<td>• Higher Eng proficiency &gt; lower Eng proficiency</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Asian, White &gt; Hispanic, African</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Some race/ethnicity x Eng proficiency interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Studies that did NOT analyze gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Echevarria, Short, &amp; Powers (2003)</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Elementary and middle school</td>
<td>Achievement with SIOP-trained teachers</td>
<td>• SIOP &gt; not SIOP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Language Groups</td>
<td>Grade Level/Age</td>
<td>Content Area</td>
<td>Findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Padrón and Waxman (1992) [Literature review]</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>K–12</td>
<td>Math/Science</td>
<td>• Not analyzed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parrish et al. (2006)</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>2–12</td>
<td>Academic achievement, English proficiency</td>
<td>• ELL &lt; not ELL, gap remains about the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slavin and Cheung (2003) [Synthesis of research]</td>
<td>Primarily Spanish-speaking</td>
<td>Beginning readers</td>
<td>Reading in English</td>
<td>• Gender not analyzed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slavin and colleagues (2003, 2006)</td>
<td>Asian, African American, and Hispanic, plus English speaking</td>
<td>K–2</td>
<td>Reading in English using SFA program</td>
<td>• SFA &gt; not SFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slavin and Madden (1999)</td>
<td>Spanish-speaking</td>
<td>K–2</td>
<td>Reading in Spanish using SFA program</td>
<td>• SFA &gt; not SFA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data were not disaggregated for gender within ELL status, but refer to the girls’ average score vs. the boys’ average score.*
*Findings in bold were reported by author(s) as significant (or with large effect sizes) or not significant; findings in regular type might be hypothesized based on other analyses within the study but were not tested by the author(s). In some cases, no analyses were completed that would allow any hypotheses; these are marked as “not analyzed.”*

Gender and Reading Comprehension

The present review shows that second and foreign language reading performance may be affected by passage content and assessment tasks. More research needs to be conducted on matters of gender and domain-specific abilities in L2 reading before particular generalizations can be made.

Given the contradictory findings on passage content, topic familiarity, and reader’s gender, it is difficult to offer practical implications for the classroom. Therefore, the suggestions below are prefaced with certain caveats: (a) this literature review is not exhaustive but rather serves as a representative sample of the research on this topic, and (b) the suggestions need further testing in classroom settings.

Prereading activities may reinforce and motivate learners to read the text, and prereading activities will help to build on the pre-existing knowledge structures. If there are gender-specific topics in the text, instructors may want to address this through prereading activities where learners interact in the classroom and learn from each other. For younger students, there is some indication that girls find a broad range of topics interesting, and boys find a narrower range of “male” topics interesting (Krashen, 1996). Reading lessons should take into account the topic familiarity and background knowledge through pre-, during-, and postreading tasks because this might motivate deeper reading and richer comprehension. Schema activation is necessary in the second and foreign language classroom. There is general agreement that every attempt should be made to allow background knowledge to facilitate performance rather than allowing its absence to inhibit performance (Alderson, 2000; Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2003; Slavin et al., 2006).

Moreover, instructors should utilize a variety of tools to assess comprehension. Females perform better on written recalls for a text topic with which both genders are equally familiar, but male and female readers scored almost the same on multiple choice questions (Brantmeier, 2004b). More specifically, Brantmeier’s (2004b) findings indicated that with an L2 passage about boxing, readers’ gender accounts for more variance than topic familiarity in recall (readers’ gender = 10%; topic familiarity = 5%), but the reverse is true for multiple choice (readers’ gender = 5%; topic familiarity = 11%). Likewise, with an L2 passage about a housewife, results show that readers’ gender accounts for more variance than topic familiarity in recall (readers’ gender = 17%; topic familiarity = 14%), and again, the reverse is true for multiple choice (readers’ gender = 10%; and topic familiarity = 14%). In summary, readers’ gender is more influential than topic familiarity in producing higher recall scores (with females scoring higher than males), but topic familiarity is more influential than readers’ gender in producing higher multiple choice scores. These results underline the need for more research on variables that influence performance on comprehension assessment tasks. Instructors should consider this when evaluating L2 reading comprehension.

If readers are equipped with the tools to comprehend a text, then perhaps the task of writing also will be easier. As demonstrated earlier, male and female readers may associate with different topics, and if they are recreating themselves through their writing, then the topic of text should be considered when assigning compositions. Another suggestion would be to have readers choose their own texts and writing topics based on their own interests.

Finally, second and foreign language test makers also should realize the importance of topic familiarity on comprehension.
and examine the existing standardized instruments (both texts and tests) to make appropriate changes where warranted. Although test constructors cannot change the gender of the reader, they can be careful not to bias their tests toward either gender. Understanding how the adult reader interacts with other variables in L2 reading provides a richer and more meaningful explanation of the manner in which gender may influence successful reading comprehension.

Strategies in Foreign and Second Language Learning

Findings of recent studies vary considerably with regard to males’ and females’ strategic behavior as compared to the studies discussed in Young and Oxford (1997). Taken together, these studies add to the growing knowledge base of how males and females employ L1 learning and use strategies, yet these studies are not enough to make generalizations about gender and strategy use. Differences in study design and objectives (for example, self-report versus treatment, no task versus task-based, cross-sectional versus longitudinal) often yield diverse results that are difficult to compare. There do appear to be salient differences in research design, target language of the subjects, tasks (reading or speaking), and the definition of strategies. Furthermore, numerous studies before and after 1997 have not considered gender as a variable. In short, there simply is not enough research available to allow us to draw solid conclusions about males and females’ strategic behavior. For example, Young and Oxford (1997) and Brantmeier (2003b) lend themselves to comparisons because they employ similar instruments and ask comparable research questions. This is exactly what needs to be done to construct a theory of gender and strategy use.

It may be true, as Young and Oxford (1997) concluded, that although there may be few strategies that are “inherently male or female,” future research should pay attention to strategies more commonly used by males and females, and to how males and females use specific strategies, and should develop approaches for helping all learners use appropriate strategies (p. 66). If researchers in all areas of second language acquisition would include gender as a variable, thereby broadly expanding the knowledge base, we can perhaps gain a clearer understanding of whether and how males and females differ in how they learn and use a second or foreign language.

Gender and Identity in Study Abroad Programs

Taken together, the studies cited in this section suggest that language learning in study abroad is a gendered experience, both at the macro level of program design and learner access to social networks, and at the micro level of interaction in specific settings and performance of identity by particular learners. This dimension of the experience is worthy of further investigation. Encounters with other cultural settings with different norms can cause serious difficulties for learners, particularly if they have been sensitized to typical American public discourses on sexism and gender equity. These norms apply not only to the more obvious, public qualities of interaction but also to the social values underlying language use. However, the story does not end with a clash of norms, nor does it involve only women.

Taken together, the studies cited here as well as earlier studies suggest that gender, as a key aspect of identity, plays a significant role in shaping the qualities of language learning experiences abroad, particularly in the cases of young women who are the majority participants in such programs (Institute for International Education, 2004). These women report that their awareness of gender is highlighted in ways that can result either in rejection of the goal of language learning or in realization that new strategies are required for the furtherance of achieving intercultural communicative competence in the languages under study.

ELL Learners in the K–12 Setting

Research with regard to ELL students is still a relatively new field. It began shortly after the first BEA was passed in 1968. Since then, the research has focused on which type of educational experience (among forms of ESL, transitional bilingual, or two-way bilingual immersion) is “best” for students. Indeed, in the Development of Literacy in Spanish Speakers (DeLSS) series of studies recently funded by the U.S. Department of Education, how children learn a first language, a second language, and whether there are differences among the educational approaches still are the main focus. First, of course, we must get past the idea that any one type of educational experience is “best” for all students. As August and Hakuta (1997), among others, point out, there is much evidence that true bilingualism results in students who are literate in English, have advanced cognitive skills, and are literate in a second language.

There is some evidence that variables such as educational background, home language, and home culture mediate the learning experience; these variables are just beginning to be studied—complicated by the fact that 75% of ELL students speak Spanish in the home and the second largest language group, with only 2% of the population, in Vietnamese (Hapstuck & Stephenson, 1993). It should be no wonder, then, that gender is so rarely studied, even though researchers do report on gender as a demographic variable. The two problems with including gender as a variable are (1) small sample sizes which may make analyzing another variable difficult and (2) archived data which frequently maintains data for groups of students rather than student-by-student, which makes analysis impossible. The nation-wide database being developed by the U.S. Department of Education in 2006 does not collect individualized student data due to a fear that a student might be identified. However, given the types of encryption and security that can be available, as well as the need for good, in-depth data, these problems must be overcome in order to allow gender and other variables to be analyzed so they can provide further insight into how students learn.

The importance of the interaction between gender and culture is important and merits further study for language devel-

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20DeLSS is a series of interrelated research projects sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. Funding is from 2000–2005 so only interim reports and information now are available. For further information and a listing of products, see www.cal.org/delss/projects.html.


SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally, to put a more specific focus on our comments and recommendations, we strongly suggest the following:

1. Analyze gender and report on students and teachers of FL and L2—the authors of this chapter had trouble finding this seemingly “routine” analysis during our literature searches.

2. Continue (or, in some cases, begin) to study the interactions among gender, culture, language status, and socioeconomic status—some of these are difficult to define empirically or are difficult to parse from one another, but we must begin to consider their impact on language learning.

3. Ensure that teachers, professors, and others associated with planning and implementing the education of language learners are prepared to understand differences in culture, language, and gender that may have effects on language learning and attitudes.

4. Understand issues in language that may cause problems for L2 students (whether K–12 students learning English or adults learning a foreign language)—for instance, many languages other than English assign gender to nouns (e.g., “la” versus “le” in French), and in English there are some nouns referred to as one gender or another (e.g., referring to ships as “she”).

5. Encourage biliteracy so those who are learning a second language, regardless of gender, age, or purpose of learning the language, feel that their skills in both languages are valued.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Young, D. (2000). An investigation into the relationship between L2 reading anxiety and L2 reading comprehension, and self-reported level of comprehension, topic familiarity, features of an L2 text and reading