example, the task demands (such as recognition versus plausibility judgments) or the strength of the relevant memory traces can affect which strategy is selected. In many situations there is a *mixture* of strategy use, such that sometimes one strategy is selected and sometimes the other is selected.[2] The flat fan function with thematically related materials might have resulted from a mixture of using the recognition (direct retrieval) strategy some of the time and the plausibility strategy the rest of the time. The fan function when plausibility is precluded shows a positive slope, so perhaps the fan function when plausibility is used exclusively would show a negative slope (yielding a roughly flat function when averaged together).

This speculation, that plausibility judgments would actually be facilitated by knowing more, was tested by Reder and Ross (1983). In this study, too, all subjects learned thematically related sets of information and were tested with those facts in a variety of conditions. As in Reder and Anderson, for some blocks of trials subjects were required to make recognition judgments in the presence of plausible (thematically related) foils, and for other blocks of trials they made recognition judgments in the presence of implausible (thematically inconsistent) foils. In addition, a new condition was used in which subjects were actually told to make thematic consistency judgments rather than recognition judgments. They were to say "yes" to both the studied statements and the plausibly true, namely the thematically related but unstudied statements. They were to say "no" to thematically unrelated statements. Figure 13.2 plots the fan functions for the three types of statements (studied, related, unrelated) used in the thematic relatedness block of trials. (The other blocks of trials replicated the earlier studies.) Here, the fan function for the thematically related not-studied statements showed a sharp, *negative* slope. Those statements could only be accepted by a plausibility-like (or thematic consistency) strategy. So the hypothesis that a plausibility strategy would show facilitation with fan was confirmed.

It is worth noting that the slope for stated probes was also negative, but much less steep than for related, not-studied items. This too can be accounted for by assuming that subjects used a *mixture* of the two strategies, since either one produces a correct response for studied statements. The bias to use plausibility was greater in the blocks where subjects were actually asked to judge thematic relatedness. To the extent that subjects were biased to use the plausibility strategy more often as a first strategy in the block requiring those judgments, the slope for the stated probes should be more negative than in the recognition block. Since only the plausibility strategy produces a correct response for the plausible, not-studied items, the function is much more steeply negative for them. Response times for these statements are also much slower than for the other test items because two strategies must often be tried before a correct response is given. That is, first the direct retrieval strategy is tried, but the statement is not

[2]Some of the data supporting these claims will be described later.

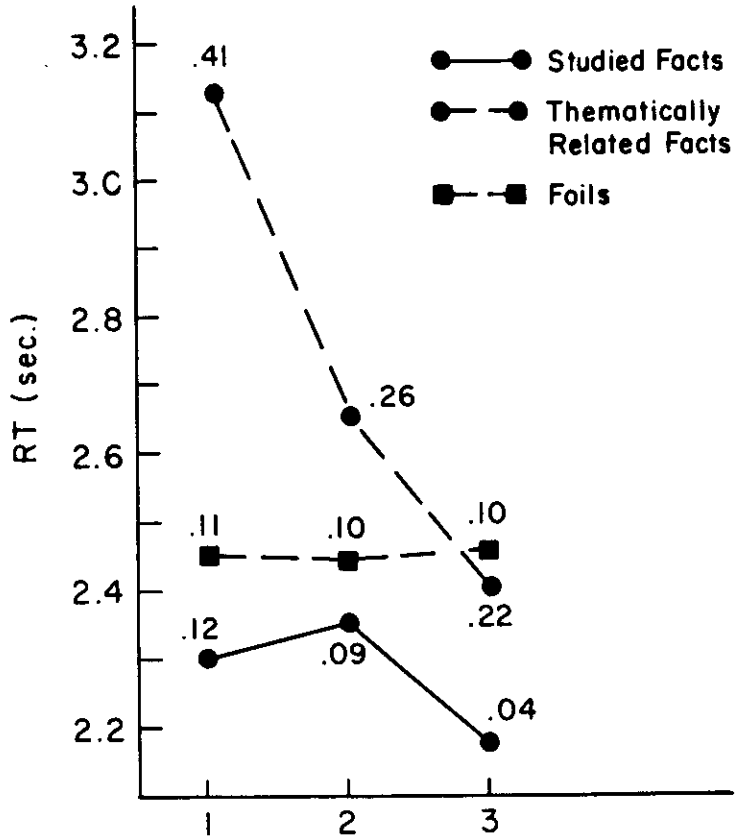

FIGURE 13.2. Mean RTs (and proportion of errors) as a function of relevant fan and type of probe in the consistency task. (Adapted from Reder & Ross, 1983, Fig. 3a.)

found in memory. If the subject quits with a guess of "no," an error is recorded and the time is not averaged into the mean RT. If the subject elects to go on to make a plausibility judgement, the RTs are necessarily much longer than when only one strategy is used to make a decision. Note the high error rate for these statements as well.

Strategy-Selection is Variable

The account given above implies that strategy-selection for question-answering does not proceed in a fixed order. Previous conceptualizations have assumed that people first attempt to answer a question by searching directly for the statement