

## *Learning Strategy Instruction in the Language Classroom: Issues and Implementation*

Anna Uhl Chamot and Vee Harris (Eds.). (2019).  
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**Research** and theory in second language acquisition (SLA) strongly suggest that what this discipline considers to be good language learners use a variety of strategies to increase command over their newly acquired language skills (Chamot, 2004). These strategies are essential in SLA for two main reasons: (a) to gain insight into the metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective processes involved in language learning; and (b) to introduce new strategies to support less successful language learners in becoming more effective in their learning (Grenfell & Harris, 1999). The ability to learn strategically is generally not inborn, but instead acquired with various levels of success in different contexts, with different tasks, and at different stages of life (Pressley & Harris, 2006). Because the same learning strategy that works for one might not work for another, however, it is mainly the learner's motivation, belief, and persistence that make the difference in driving him or her to intentionally explore new learning strategies and to choose the one that can best assist the learning itself. This recognition of language learners' ability to bring their own awareness, styles, and strategies to the process of language learning was not evident until the late 1970s (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975); now, however, language learning strategies are leading language teachers and researchers to devote increased time and focus to learning strategy instruction in the classroom. To meet this instructional shift, *Learning Strategy Instruction in the Language Classroom: Issues and Implementation* (2019), edited by Anna Uhl Chamot and Vee Harris, presents a clear and well-organized collection of methods that teachers can use to assist their language learners in advancing their skills, and that Dr. Chamot has recommended for several years be introduced earlier in the learning process (Chamot, 2004).

As Volume 132 in the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) series published by Multilingual Matters, *Learning Strategy Instruction* is dedicated to Dr. Chamot, to honor her immense impact on research and teaching in language education and to commemorate her legacy of the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) (Chamot, 2009). The intended audience of this book includes both current English and foreign language teachers and teacher candidates now enrolled in higher education, as well as a wider population of pre- or inservice educators at all levels who are increasingly required to implement language learning strategies in their classrooms. Chamot and Harris offer this work in the belief that learning strategy instruction should not be postponed until the learner reaches an intermediate or advanced level, because beginner students also need strategies that can increase their motivation for further study and resulting learning success (Chamot, 2004).

To support this conviction, the aim of *Learning Strategy Instruction* is to provide a wide range of strategies to boost language learning and performance results in the L2 classroom by presenting different

models of strategic instruction and how they can be tailored according to the learner's age, attainment level, and reading or speaking ability. In this goal, it not only covers theory but also practical and research-based contributions of language learning strategy instruction (LLSI) in the L2 classroom—a combination that is rare to find in the same work. In addition, it describes the psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives of international experts on different models of strategy instruction and their implementation in second and foreign language education, creating a rich resource for teachers in LLSI.

Underpinning this packed and diverse volume is its clarity of format and presentation. The book is organized into four parts and 17 chapters: Part 1 (Models and Contexts) and Part 2 (Less Studied and Less Taught Groups of Strategies) are concerned with the theoretical issues of LLSI, such as focus and design; Part 3 (Implementation: The Learners) and Part 4 (Implementation: The Teachers) discuss more practical questions, mostly centered on the implementation of pedagogical activities and resources in both learners and teachers.

In Part 1, Chapter 1 introduces the recent research and future directions in LLSI through the meta-analysis of 112 samples from 77 studies, while Chapter 2 presents the different approaches to learning strategy instruction in L1 and L2 and the different models of strategy instruction (e.g., CALLA). Chapters 3–6 focus on diversity and individual differences in learners: Chapter 3 speculates about the multiplicity of socioeconomic and sociocultural backgrounds, considering diversity and integration as rich resources or assets students bring into the classroom that educators can further build into their curriculum. Chapter 4 argues that peer and self-assessment have a crucial role in developing self-regulation in a learner's autonomy. Chapter 5 emphasizes the role of the teacher's feedback to improve the learner's self-efficacy and attribution in a language assessment system, and includes this observation: "Learning to learn requires that students begin to define their own learning goals and success criteria; monitor their own learning; critically examine their own work; incorporate feedback from peers, teachers [ . . . ] and use all of this to deepen their awareness of how they function in the learning process" (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014, p. 17). Chapter 6 reinforces how students become aware of the value of what they know and experience to support an increasing autonomy in their content and language integrated learning (CLIL).

In Part 2, a range of issues about the less studied and less taught strategies of instruction alert the teacher-reader to be aware of grammar, culture, and pragmatics while teaching students learning a second or foreign language. Chapter 7 presents for reader exploration some grammar learning strategies (e.g., metacognitive, affective, social, and cognitive) for planning and instruction in the second or foreign language classroom that have always generated considerable controversy among language educators, but ultimately are required in second and foreign language development (Larsen-Freeman, 2003; Pawlak, 2009); the material sets forth essential principles for educational contexts where the positive contribution of grammar teaching is part of the language curriculum. Chapter 8 posits that the strategies students need to develop in order to acquire critical cultural awareness should be taught explicitly (inference or deduction) instead of implicitly (controlled or spontaneous oral or written production, or reception), so they could fully explore and enjoy other cultures side by side with learning to critically assess their own culture the same way. Chapter 9 introduces pragmatic strategies for learning and performing in a target language.

In Part 3, Chapters 10 and 12 are concerned with how to adapt LLSI according to the ages of young language learners (Chapter 10) or to the attainment level and needs of adolescent learners (Chapter 12); Chapters 11 and 13 tackle how to integrate LLSI into the curriculum—i.e., in the case of integrating LLSI into textbooks for learning English in Greek primary and secondary schools (Chapter 11), or considering the different ways in which technology can be used to foster learners' strategy use (Chapter 13).

The final part of the book discusses teachers and their reflections on their own strategies used in their classrooms. Chapter 14 asserts that teachers' self-assessment not only improves their instructional strategy practices, but also enables them to understand and focus on how they can better support their students' learning. As the next step, Chapter 15 encourages teachers to engage in their own learner self-

management using SMART goals—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely—in their lesson planning to monitor, identify, and reflect on teaching problems and consider potential solutions they can incorporate into their teaching and lesson plans. Chapter 16 gives examples of what is working and provides teacher activities using LLSI from around the world (e.g., Canada, Turkey, the United States, the United Kingdom). Each of the chapters concludes with a short list of questions as possible directions for future research; Chapter 17, the final chapter, summarizes all these questions to shed light on future research directions and designs in SLA and what is still needed to be learned about LLSI.

I found this book to be an impressive resource and highly recommend it as complementary reading for everyone, at any given time, connected to learning strategy instruction in the language classroom. It can be deeply useful for language teachers, university professors, and researchers already working in the field who are familiar with and incorporating the topics it presents. Most important, it could be particularly beneficial as a supplement to a university or college curriculum in language education to inform future inservice classroom teachers about language learning strategy instruction as they incorporate these strategies into their future teaching methods and approaches. They will be the ones training the students of today and tomorrow, and must direct and encourage their L2 language learners to use the most appropriate strategy to increase learning success.

One possible drawback of this valuable collection is that while it introduces many choices of learning strategies based on the learning context and the learning task, it gives less attention to the learning styles of the language learner and the learner's characteristics and learning experiences (e.g., language proficiency, cultural and educational backgrounds), all of which undoubtedly play a crucial role in the choice of language learning education and thus merit awareness and examination.

Overall, this volume's strength is the editors' commitment to revitalizing interest in second language teaching and learning and in strategy instruction. In this era of multilingualism, in which language learning naturally occurs in our globalized world, it can be questioned whether learning strategies are much needed or should even exist at all. But it is also evident that many monolinguals are still interested in target language learning opportunities—whether to improve their life chances, to meet personal goals, or for the individual pleasure of simply being able to speak another language. Therefore, this volume is crucial in advocating and fostering current models of language learning strategy instruction. Through the strategic methods it presents, classroom teachers can help develop students' knowledge about their own thinking and strategic processes and encourage them to adopt strategies that will improve their language learning and proficiency skills.

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