

A Study of Learning Strategies That Help Language Learners to Achieve Greater Independence

Kerstin Dofs

Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, New Zealand

Abstract

This research project at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) aimed to investigate effective ways of helping language learners to achieve greater independence. It is the successor to a previous research project called 'Horses for Courses or Courses for Horses' (Dofs & Hornby 2006). The first project described an investigation into the use of the Language Self Access Centre, (LSAC) i.e. how, why and when learners and teachers use the centre. The findings showed that the centre is well used by many staff and learners but some students and staff used it less frequently or not at all. Other findings included the limited use of study strategies, and inefficient use of both study materials, and technical equipment. Recommendations to maximise effective exploitation of the LSAC in the future were made from the findings. This paper describes ongoing action research initiatives to implement some of the recommendations from the initial project. The actions included professional development sessions for academic staff aimed at raising awareness, and use of language learning strategies activities in the classroom. Students shared ideas and experiences from the classroom sessions through messages and notes posted onto a billboard in the LSAC. This strengthened the link between classroom work and the LSAC. Five teachers, five classes with 90 students were the primary participants. The actions were carried out over 9 weeks and were accompanied by interviews with students and teachers before and after they took place. The findings show that students became more aware of language learning strategies, and changed their study habits as a result of the actions implemented. Recommendations for ongoing student awareness raising of language learning strategies arose from these findings.

Literature Review

Autonomous Learning

The concepts and terms surrounding autonomous learning are many and varied. Some of the terminology found in the literature includes *learner autonomy* (Little, 1991), *independent learning* (Sheerin, 1997), and *learner independence* (Palfreyman & Smith, 2003). Other commonly used terms are *self-directed learning*, *individualised learning*, *self-study*, *self-directed learning* and *self-access learning*. Within each of these terms there is a suggestion that the learner engages in entirely self-directed activities and is responsible for her/his learning. Benson & Voller (1997) suggest that the concept of autonomy does not necessarily mean total learner control and they provide five definitions:

1. ...*situations* in which learners study entirely on their own
2. ...a set of *skills* which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning
3. ...an inborn *capacity* [to learn] which is suppressed by institutional education

4. ...the exercise of *learners' responsibility* for their own learning
5. ...the *right* of learners to determine the direction of their own learning
[italics in the original]

(Benson & Voller, 1997, pp. 1-2)

This study adopts definitions two to five above but rejects the first. If we use autonomous learning environments to augment (or even replace) classroom-based learning in our educational institutions, then we have a responsibility to support learners to use those environments to enhance their learning. Teacher input and support, therefore, is a vital component of self-directed learning.

Strategy Training

Strategy training in the language learning context is, as offered by Oxford, (1990), 'training of language learning strategies' (p. 200). This includes the learning about, and the practice of, efficient strategies for language learning. Holec (1981) was one of the first to point out the responsibility for educational providers to foster autonomy. He emphasised that one of the objectives of adult training establishments is the aim of strengthening learners' ability to assume responsibility for his/her learning. Moreover, he underlined that educational institutions need to provide learners with all the information that will be of benefit to them in their learning. The concept was expanded on by Wenden & Rubin (1987) through their studies on strategy training in language learning. Oxford (1990) presents a general model for helping language learners learn efficiently through language strategy training in her Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). She outlines an eight step model for teaching language learning strategies which is closely tied to regular language learning, i.e. can easily be included into lesson plans. The first five steps in this integrated approach involve planning and preparation by the teacher; the remaining three steps involve students in the conducting, evaluating and revising of the strategy training. Step six, the conducting step, includes 'completely informed training' (p. 207). She points out the importance of informing students as completely as possible about why the strategies are important for language learning and how they can be used in new situations.

The use of strategy training to guide learners to efficient strategies for language learning has been explored by a number of educational researchers, and different approaches have emerged over the years. Ellis & Sinclair (1989) for example, present a systematically organised learner training course, aimed at raising student awareness of learning processes and techniques available for language learning. They assert that this is an efficient way of helping students with their language studies; moreover it ultimately fosters learner autonomy. Although the course includes numerous ideas on how to become effective language learners, this approach seems to be somewhat de-contextualised as less immediate practice of English is included in the course. However, Chamot & O'Malley (1990) remark that teachers can integrate Ellis & Sinclair's course with their regular language materials and ensure that the strategies taught separately are transferred and practised with other instructional materials and learning situations. This requires a significant amount of planning by the teacher.

Oxford (2002) outlines a useful sequence for strategy instructions aimed at English as a Second Language (ESL) students. She suggests that teachers can 'weave learning strategy training into regular classroom events in a natural but highly explicit way, providing ample opportunity for practicing strategies and transferring them to new tasks' (p.130). The sequence she suggests is in short:

1. Explore students' learning strategies.
2. Preview teaching material and tasks to identify strategies for instruction.
3. Present strategies - naming and explaining when and why to use them.
4. Model each strategy – how to do it.
5. Provide opportunities to practice the strategies.

6. Student evaluation.
7. Develop students' ability to transfer strategy use to new tasks.

Brown (2002) provides an integrated approach through a ready-to-use resource which can be deployed with regular English learning materials without too much teacher preparation in his book *Strategies for Success*, in which practical exercises using the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, are integrated. The material includes exercises for pair and group work which enable students to evaluate, discuss and compare their use of strategies. Students not only learn about their own use of strategies but also learn from each other. They are in addition encouraged to use new knowledge in new situations.

However, Rees-Miller (1993) is sceptical about the effectiveness of strategy instruction. She points out that teachers should not uncritically adopt strategy instruction models into their teaching. Her advice is to consider the following language acquisition factors: learners' cultural background, age, educational background, life experience, affective factors, and teachers' and students' beliefs about language learning, before conducting strategies based instruction lessons. This was acknowledged and responded to by Chamot & Rubin (1994). They suggest that consideration of these factors does not contradict the effectiveness of strategies instruction; rather it gives teachers a broader view of factors involved in language acquisition.

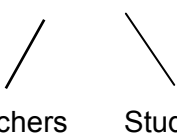
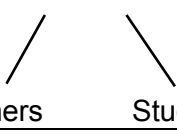
Links between Classroom Learning and Language Learning Centres (LLC)

The importance of bridging the gap between classroom learning and language learning centres (LLC) has been noted by a number of researchers. Gardner & Miller (1999) emphasise that in order for self access language learning (SALL) to be successful, teachers must prepare their students to accept more responsibility for their learning and this preparation must begin in the classroom and become part of the teaching strategies adopted by teachers (see also Esch, 1994 and Hurd, 1998a, 1998b). Cotterall & Reinders (2000) conclude in their study of the effectiveness of the SALL opportunities at Victoria University, New Zealand, that 'if stronger ties were forged between class-based learning and independent learning, learners' awareness of the potential of SALL might increase' (p. 35). The importance of a close relationship between class teachers and the LLC is also commented on by Gill Sturtridge (Victoria, 2000). She indicates that the teacher's involvement in LLC is highly beneficial, as teachers can guide learners towards working independently.

Methodology

The overall research question was 'How does implementation of individual language learning training and tutor awareness building affect students' study habits?' To be able to answer this question the following methods were used: interviews with five teachers and fifteen students from five classes before any actions occurred. The interviews were followed by (1) activities in the classroom on strategy awareness-raising using the book, *Strategies for Success* by H. D Brown (2002), and (2) professional development (PD) for teachers on strategy instruction methods through the Language Self Access Centre – Special Interest Group, (LSAC-SIG). Furthermore, the students kept learner journals as part of the awareness-raising exercises. After the interventions new interviews with teachers and students were conducted. Finally, the data processing and reporting phase of the project followed. More details on teacher and student intervention points are outlined below.

Table 1: An Overview of the Research Design Including the Intervention Points and the Time Frame for the Study

Interventions	Time
Interview 1  Teachers Students	April 07
<i>Strategies for Success</i> Including learner journals	May - June 07
Professional Development	May - June 07
Interview 2  Teachers Students	June 07
Data processing and reporting	Sept 07

Participants

Teachers

All teachers in the School of English at CPIT were invited to participate in this project. Two teachers teaching international students, (non-residents on study visas), and three teachers teaching permanent resident students volunteered. They were interviewed before and after the PD sessions and strategies instruction lessons were carried out (see appendices 2 & 3 for the interview questions). To introduce the concept of language learning strategies (LLS) six categories of strategies were discussed briefly at the first interview. They were: meta-cognitive strategies, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, affective strategies and social strategies as described in the SILL (Oxford, 1990). This was followed by an analysis of which of the strategies they thought their students used most frequently and least frequently (adapted from Griffiths & Parr, 2001, see Appendix 7). The teacher interviews were transcribed and analysed for themes relating to the research question, (see above). Three of the five teachers were involved as co-researchers in the interviews with students, and four of the teachers, including the three who interviewed students, participated in Language Self Access Centre – Special Interest Group (LSAC-SIG) meetings, which were held twice during this period. The theme for the whole year’s PD sessions at the LSAC-SIG meetings was intended to cover LLS with a focus on one of the skills (listening, writing, reading and speaking) at each of the meetings. Therefore, at the first PD session we discussed language learning strategies in general from Oxford’s (1990) SILL, followed by a closer look at listening strategies. The second meeting contained a model lesson on how to overtly include strategies instruction in a listening lesson (see Appendix 1). This lesson was based on the teaching model Oxford (2002) suggests for presenting new strategies to students. A plan for classroom work was drawn up together with the participating teachers. This included raising students’ awareness about language learning strategies through

working through 8 of the 12 units in the book *Strategies for Success* by Brown (2002). The themes in these units were: What kind of learner are you?, Discovering your learning styles, Motivating yourself and setting goals, Developing self-confidence and lowering anxiety, Learning to take risks, The influence of your native language, Using individual learning strategies, and Using group strategies.

Students

There were 90 students in total in the five participating classes. Interviews were conducted with three volunteering students from each class before and after the work on building language learning strategy awareness (see Appendices 4 & 5 for the interview questions). Five of the students from the first interview finished or moved to other classes during this period, and were replaced by five new students in the second interview, (one student finished class the week before the second interview and came in only to participate in the interview). Consequently, twenty students were interviewed: eleven students before and after the classroom work, four only before the classroom work, and five only after the classroom work. The interviews were conducted by the researcher, non-participant staff, i.e. staff not involved with teaching of these classes, and three of the participating teachers, who interviewed students from a class other than their own. To give students a brief introduction to LLS, in the first interview, the interviewer introduced the concept of LLS, and explained Oxford's six categories (see above) This was followed by a task designed to grade which strategy they thought they used most frequently, (adapted from Griffiths & Parr, 2001, see Appendix 6). The LLS training was done through the units in *Strategies for Success* (Brown, 2002) as mentioned above. The students kept a diary for which a specific writing task in each unit of the book was outlined. The interviews and diaries were analysed, after the awareness raising interventions, for data which indicated the following themes linked to the research question:

- change of study habits
- opinions about the work with *Strategies for Success* (Brown, 2002)
- raised awareness and use of LLS
- opinions about where, when and how LLS should occur

The connection with the LSAC was established through exercises in each of the units. Students' answers and ideas on how to practise LLS were posted onto a notice board in the LSAC as a reminder to themselves but also for other students to see and learn from. The combination of teacher and student interviews and student diary entries enabled triangulation of data and facilitated investigation of influences on students' study habits as a result of the implemented actions. Finally, the data from all sources was cross-referenced against results and recommendations within research on language learning strategies identified from the literature. Recommendations for further development of support for students' language learning strategies awareness were identified. These recommendations will inform the agenda for ongoing implementation of combined LSAC and classroom support.

Results

Teachers – Following Teaching

Four of the five teachers had similar answers to the questions in the second interview. They thought students benefited from the work with strategies: they were reminded of, or learned more about, LLS; they want to apply LLS ideas to their classroom teaching; they learned more about students' strategy use; and they had ideas on how to apply this to the curriculum (for the interview questions see Appendix 2).

Some of the comments were:

I think doing this has made me even more so aware of the skills and strategies needed to learn English and relate what we are doing to those.

It's made me think more about being more explicit.

It's really good. It's heightened my awareness and the students' awareness.

However, one of the teachers declared that she had not really had time for this project and therefore she had not conveyed any real enthusiasm for the subject and said that students probably noticed that. One reason was that she considered that the lessons about language learning strategies came too late for her students, as they were at the highest level in the school with many of them leaving at the end of the semester. Nevertheless, she provided time for the work with *Strategies for Success* (Brown, 2002) and acknowledged the usefulness of this kind of awareness-raising for other classes, for whom she can see 'some enormous advantages, mainly in consciousness raising'.

Table 2: The Main Findings Regarding LLS Training

Participants	Findings
Teachers	noted that students benefited from the work with strategies
	were reminded of or learned more about LLS
	learned more about students' strategy use
	had ideas on how to apply this to the curriculum
	want to apply LLS ideas to their classroom teaching
Students	changed study habits
	raised their awareness and use of LLS
	believed LLS should be part of the English language learning/teaching in class
	appreciated sharing ideas about strategy use
	appreciated certain areas more than others in the work with <i>Strategies for Success</i> (Brown, 2002)
	had ideas on who should participate in the learning of LLS
	had ideas on where LLS training should occur
	had ideas on when LLS training should be done
had ideas on how LLS training should be done	

Students

Most of the students expressed a change in their study habits as a result of participating in this project. One of the students who did not notice any change said, 'I knew a lot about the ideas from the book already but good to see that the things I was already doing was right'.

Students' ideas about learning LLS in class as part of the English lesson were examined in both student interviews. Eight of the fifteen students interviewed said that they thought it was a good idea in the first interview. However, in the second interview, fifteen out of the sixteen students interviewed expressed a preference that it should be taught in class (for the interview questions see appendices 4 & 5). Students appreciated sharing ideas about strategy use. Fourteen of sixteen students answered that they thought it was a useful activity. The most helpful, useful or interesting unit was *Developing self-confidence and lowering anxiety* with fifteen of sixteen students

interviewed mentioning that unit. This was followed by *Learning to take risks* with eleven of the sixteen students showing interest in that unit. Both these units belong to the affective strategy group. That was the strategy type that students used least frequently according to the first interview. Almost half of the students mentioned *Motivating yourself and setting goals* as a unit they found helpful, useful or interesting to work with. Students think the work with LLS suits all levels of English although beginners would possibly need more time on explanations on LLS. They also point out that it is useful for new students. Students think this should be taught as part of the programme. Students think learning about LLS should occur in the beginning of a course with reminders throughout the course, but not necessarily in every lesson.

Discussion and Conclusion

A summary of teachers' and students' answers suggest that awareness-raising about LLS should be introduced to students at all levels of English. They suggested doing this at the beginning of the course with reminders throughout the course or year. Some teachers suggest making it part of every lesson. The most important ideas which arose were helping students develop self-confidence, lowering anxiety, and teaching them how they can learn to take risks. To make the work successful at lower levels the language has to be simplified. According to the findings in the literature review, explicit teaching of LLS in the classroom should be included in teachers' lesson plans (Victori, 2000). Moreover, teachers need to learn more about how to include LLS into teaching and learning; therefore it should be part of ongoing professional development (PD) sessions for teachers in the School of English at CPIT. However, a presentation of the findings in this research, followed by discussions with all teachers in the School of English, would enhance the possibility of reaching more students and staff. An action plan for the teaching of LLS would be a useful follow-up. Teachers have signalled anecdotally that they appreciate the close connection between theory and practice on LLS provided by model lessons; therefore we should have ongoing PD sessions on strategy theory linked to the language skills; listening, reading, writing and speaking, in combination with model lessons. In addition, with the aim to consolidate and reinforce the strategies students learn in the classroom, the Language Self Access Centre should provide further scaffolding through suitable materials and individualised support.

Limitations

A number of limitations of the project were evident at the outset and others emerged as it progressed: Findings are only relevant to the CPIT context because of the small sample size and relatively limited data collection and analysis. There was no attempt to achieve statistical reliability and the data were interpreted in descriptive terms only. The research project was too short to measure any permanent changes in students' strategies use. However, the results can be interpreted as an indication of students' perceived changes as a result from participating in this specific project. The strength of the data would have been improved by further triangulation, e.g. by think-aloud journal processes for the students, and by questionnaires. As student interviews were conducted by five different staff members some of the interview questions may have been conveyed and interpreted in different ways.

The Author

Kerstin Dofs is an English Language Teacher and the Manager of the Language Self Access Centre (LSAC) at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT). She has worked as an English language teacher in Sweden and New Zealand. She holds a bachelor's degree in Education from Mid Sweden University in Härnösand, Sweden, a TESOL Certificate from Christchurch College of Education, (CCE) and a Graduate Certificate in English Language Teaching from CPIT. Her research interest lies in the field of language learning strategies, and strategies instruction.

Appendix 1



Embedding a focus on learning strategies in class work

Demonstration Lesson Tuesday June 12th 2007

Mark Hornby

CPIT School of English and Education

Stage	Teacher activity	Student activity
1. Preparation	Set context: camper vans/business Assess prior knowledge of strategies	Discuss what they know about the camper van business in NZ – names of companies & history of the business Brainstorm what listening strategies they know. (Handout 1) Add to lists from taxonomy (Handout 2)
2. Awareness raising	Name and elicit definitions of strategies: Before: List anticipated words Set questions for yourself Self talk While: Affective state/relax Be comfortable with vagueness Directed attention After: Summarising content Set questions for others Use new vocabulary	Respond to teacher questions Listen to explanations
3. Model the strategies 4. Practice – students use strategies	Take students through strategies & demonstrate/model each one; before, during & after listening	Watch demonstration/model Use strategies: List vocab/questions on w/b Self-affirmation Relaxation exercise Prepare to listen selectively Clear desk & mind of distractions Write sentences to summarise the text Write questions for another group on w/b & answer these orally
5. Evaluate	Set discussion task	Students talk together: What have you learned from this lesson? How useful were the strategies? (Grade from 1-5) Which strategies might you use next time?
6. Transfer	Set homework task	Listen to business news tomorrow morning. Your teacher will tape it. Use these strategies and bring questions to class.

Appendix 2

Interview questions for tutors at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology April 2007

I am going to ask some questions about your experience and opinion about teaching language learning strategies. The questions will include the current use of strategy instructions, what strategies students use and what ideas you might have on improving students' study habits.

1. Tell me anything you know about language learning strategies?
2. Use of strategies instruction
 - a. When you prepare a lesson, for example a listening lesson;
 - i. Do you make students aware of why they are doing specific tasks?
 - ii. Do you show them how they can do it, what strategies they can use
 - iii. Do you allow time in class for sharing ideas on what strategies each of the students use
3. Opinion about strategies instruction in class
 - a. Do you think strategies instruction helps students become more effective learners?
 - b. If YES; In your opinion, why are they helpful. If NO; Why not?
 - c. Examples
4. Do you have any ideas on ways/materials to teach language learning strategies
5. What strategies do you think students use most frequently? (see summary sheet)
6. Set up a time for a meeting to decide what to do with the class and when to start. When would it suit you?
W. 15 Wed 11/4 - Frid 13/4

Appendix 3

Interview questions for tutors at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology June 2007

This is a follow up on the interview conducted in March about your experience and opinion about teaching language learning strategies. The questions will include the work on *Strategies for Success* and if there have been any changes to your teaching of strategies, if you would consider using strategies instruction with your class in the future etc.

1. What is your opinion about the work, *Strategies for Success*, you have done with your class?
 - a. What has been
 - i. Very good?
 - ii. Good?
 - iii. Not so good?
 - iv. Bad?
 - v. Interesting?
 - vi. New?
 - b. Would you like to add any other comments about the *Strategies for Success* work?
2. Last time I asked you to talk about anything you knew about language learning strategies, now after you have worked with *Strategies for Success* and maybe been to one or two of the LSAC-SIG PD sessions, (check if they have been to the meetings) do you feel you have learnt something new about language learning strategies. If yes what?
3. Are there any new ideas you think you will apply to your future teaching?
4. Use of strategies instruction
 - a. When you prepare and hold a lesson now, (*not your work with St f Su*) do you think, of including strategies instruction more/less/same as before?
 - i. Do you show how to do a task, what strategies students can use
 - ii. Discuss why this strategy
 - iii. Do you give time for evaluation, (did this strategy work for me)
 - iv. Do you give time in class for sharing useful strategies
5. How easy or difficult do you feel it would be to include strategy instruction to your teaching?
6. Is there anything you feel you would like to know more about, suggestions for PD etc?
7. Any other comments about language learning strategies?

Appendix 4

Interview questions for students in the School of English Language (SEE) Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, April 2007

I am going to ask some questions about your study habits and what language learning strategies you are familiar with. (Explain strategies if necessary) What students do to help them; get, store, retrieve and use English.

- 0. Which level of English are you studying at? How is your English?**
- 1. Tell me anything about your study habits; what you do to learn English.**
- 2. Look at the strategy sheet and number them from 6 to 1.**
- 3. What does your tutor do to help you learn English?**
- 4. What instructions does your tutor give you to help you learn English;** (strategies instruction) What does your tutor tell you to do when you, for example, do a reading task? Before you start, during the reading and after. *(difficult question, needs a lot of explanation and examples)*
 - a. Does the tutor show you how you can improve your language skills,** (re, li, spe, wr)? **What strategies you can use?** (Reading; skimming, scanning, reading for pleasure, speed reading, etc)
 - b. Does the tutor tell you why you are doing a task?** (for example; because that is how I would read in my own language or; through scanning I save a lot of time and get the information needed anyway)
 - c. After you have done an exercise in class; do you share ideas/discuss with the whole class on what strategies that work/worked best for you?**
- 5. Opinion about strategies instruction in class**
 - a. Do you think your tutor should teach you how you can learn English?,** (techniques,) **what you can do and why,** (Give strategies instruction)
 - i. If Yes; Why? If No; Why not?**
 - ii. Examples**
 - b. Do you think strategies instruction helps you become more effective learner?**
 - i. If Yes; In your opinion, why are they helpful. If No; Why not?**
 - ii. Examples**
- 6. Do you have any other ideas on what help you would need to learn English?**
- 7. Is it ok with a follow-up interview if we need to clarify something?**

Appendix 5

Interview questions for students in the School of English Language (SEE) Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, June 2007

This is a follow up on the interview held in May about your study habits and what language learning strategies you are familiar with. (What students do to help them; get, store, retrieve and use English).

1. Last time you said you (I'm going to make one for each student and fill in what they said, just so we are able to link the interview back nicely) **Have your study habits changed in any way since then?**

2. Tell me anything about the work with the *Strategies for Success* units you have worked with in class for the last 8 weeks.

(If they need a reminder, the units were; what kind of learner, discovering learning styles, motivating yourself and setting goals, developing self-confidence and lowering anxiety, learning to take risks, influence of native language, using individual learning strategies and group strategies) (see the index in the book)

(Wait for an answer and then use the following prompts)

- a. **What has been;**
 - i. **Helpful?** (In what way?)
 - ii. **Good?**
 - iii. **Bad? What?**
 - iv. **Difficult? Why?**
 - v. **Interesting? Examples**
 - vi. **Something else?**

3. Last time we asked you what your tutor does to help you learn English? Do you think there have been any changes to what your tutor does since we started the work with strategies.

Prompt - think of at other times than when working with the units

4. What is your opinion now about language learning strategies?

(Wait for an answer and then use the following prompts)

- a. **Should they be taught in the classroom, by the teacher, as part of the English course?**
- b. **Do you find it useful to share ideas, about strategies, in your class?**

5. Remember to ask for their diaries

Ask if it is OK if they get the diary back in a couple of days, (otherwise give them to Kerstin to copy them at this occasion)

Appendix 6

Language-learning strategies: What students do to help them; get, store, retrieve and use English

A researcher Rebecca Oxford divides language learning strategies into six groups.

Question: In your opinion, which of these strategy groups would you say you use most frequently?

Could you please number them from 6 to 1 where
6 = most frequent
1 = least frequent

Meta-cognitive strategies Strategies used by students to help them plan, organise and self-evaluate their studies.
Example: Personal homework timetable that I follow or time management; I spend 1 hour in the LSAC every day and at the end of the week I check if I have learnt what I set out to learn for the week.

Memory strategies: Strategies used by students to help them remember new language items.

Cognitive strategies: Strategies which help students think about and understand the new language.
Example: Review and repeat vocabulary or grammar points in my mind, reread lesson notes.

Compensation strategies: Strategies used by students to help them compensate for lack of knowledge
Example: What I do if I don't know a word, use a synonym or look it up in a dictionary.

Affective strategies: Strategies relating to how students feel about the new language
Example: I tell myself I *can* do this, I make sure I feel well when I learn.

Social strategies: Strategies used by students which involve interaction with other people.
Example: I ask people to slow down if I don't understand. I ask for the meaning of unknown words. Me and my friend help each other.

Appendix 7

Language-learning strategies: What students do to help them; get, store, retrieve and use English

A researcher Rebecca Oxford divides language learning strategies into six groups.

Question: In your opinion, which of these strategy groups would you say students use most frequently?

Could you please number them from 6 to 1 where
6 = most frequent
1 = least frequent

Meta-cognitive strategies Strategies used by students to help them plan, organise and self-evaluate their studies.
Example: Personal homework timetable that I follow or time management; I spend 1 hour in the LSAC every day and at the end of the week I check if I have learnt what I set out to learn for the week.

Memory strategies: Strategies used by students to help them remember new language items.

Cognitive strategies: Strategies which help students think about and understand the new language.
Example: Review and repeat vocabulary or grammar points in my mind, reread lesson notes.

Compensation strategies: Strategies used by students to help them compensate for lack of knowledge
Example: What I do if I don't know a word, use a synonym or look it up in a dictionary.

Affective strategies: Strategies relating to how students feel about the new language
Example: I tell myself I *can* do this, I make sure I feel well when I learn.

Social strategies: Strategies used by students which involve interaction with other people.
Example: I ask people to slow down if I don't understand. I ask for the meaning of unknown words. Me and my friend help each other.

References

- Benson, P., & Voller, P. (Eds.). (1997). *Autonomy & independence in language learning*. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited.
- Brown, H. D. (2002). *Strategies for success: A practical guide to learning English*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Chamot, A. U., & Rubin. J. (1994). *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(4), 771-776.
- Cotterall, S., & Reinders, H. (2000). *Fortress or bridge? Learners' perceptions and practice in self access language learning*. Retrieved April 5, 2007, from <http://www.hayo.nl/tesolanz.html>
- Dofs, K., & Hornby, M. (2006). Horses for courses or courses for horses: Uptake of autonomous learning opportunities by staff and learners in English as an additional language programmes at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology. In A. J. Scott, (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 10th Community Languages and English for Speakers of Other Languages Conference: Origins and Connections: Linking Theory, Research and Practice*. Napier: New Zealand September 29th - October 2nd 2006.
- Ellis, G., & Sinclair, B. (1989). *Learning to learn English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Esch, E. (Ed.). (1994). *Self-access and the adult language learner*. London: CILT.
- Gardner, D., & Miller, L. (1999). *Establishing self-access: From theory to practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Griffiths, C., & Parr, J. M. (2001). Language-learning strategies: Theory and perception. *ELT Journal*, 55(3), 247-254.
- Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Hurd, S. (1998a). Too carefully led or too carelessly left alone? *Language Learning Journal* 17, 70-74.
- Hurd, S. (1998b). Autonomy, at any price? Issues and concerns from a British HE perspective. *Foreign Language Annals* 31(2), 219-230.
- Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy 1: Definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentik.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Oxford, R. (2002). Language learning strategies in a nutshell: Update and ESL suggestions. In J.C. Richards & W.A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp.133-143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Palfreyman, D., & Smith, R. C. (Eds.). (2003). *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Rees-Miller, J. (1993). A critical appraisal of learner training: Theoretical bases and teaching implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(4), 679-689.
- Sheerin, S. (1997). An exploration of the relationship between self-access and independent learning. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy & independence in language learning* (pp. 54-65). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Victori, M. (Ed.). (2000). Views on self-access language learning: A talk with Leslie Dickinson, Lindsay Miller, Gill Sturtridge and Radha Ravindran. *Links & Letters*, 7, 165-180. Retrieved April 5, 2007, from <http://www.raco.cat/index.php/LinksLetters/article/view/22724/22558>
- Wenden, A. L., & Rubin, J. (1987). *Learner strategies in language learning*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall.