



# **Learner Strategies in Foreign Language Learning and Instructional Implementation in the Context of Teaching Young Learners**

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## **Abstract**

Learning a foreign language is as important as a native language. It is very important for students who go to foreign countries for their studies. In this piece of paper, focus is given on the youngsters acquiring learning strategies for learning a foreign language. This paper will concentrate on the grounds for and ways in which teachers' use of learning strategies when teaching foreign languages influences learners' capacity to learn. The topic is crucial to discuss since many teachers and learners agree that effective communication is an essential component of learning, particularly when doing it in foreign place. Three main theories of language learning which includes Piaget theory, Vygotsky's theory and Chomsky's theory are discussed. Examining the learners' language learning strategies is the recommended method for comprehending the phenomenon of language learning. Two main categories are discussed below regarding the learning strategies which are directly strategies and indirectly strategies. The ability to connect with young heads is a quality that teachers must possess. They must comprehend not only how young learners acquire knowledge, but also the best teaching strategies, in order to achieve this. The role of the teachers in implementation of such strategies is of great significance which helps the young learners to learn the language with more efficacies.

Keywords: Foreign Language, Learning Strategies, Youngsters, Teachers, Communication, Learning Skills

## **Introduction**

Learning a non-native language outside of the environment where it is usually spoken is known as foreign language learning. Learning a language necessitates a significant amount of effort. However, there are techniques to accelerate overall learning. The article highlights some of the key trends in teaching a foreign language to learners that are young, which is a rising subject of interest for both instructors and researchers. According to Nikolov and Mihaljevic, (2019) for young language learners as those aged 6 to 14, there are also a growing number of initiatives and programs for youngsters.

### **Theory of Language Learning**

Considering language learning as if it were a new skill seems to be another way to look at it. The theory of learning a language proposes that children learn to speak by practice and learning. Younger students are appreciated for speaking a language well when they turn older, and if they do not speak a language with that much proficiency, they are being taught. Language is very powerful that a single word can be enough to fall us into a misery and an also a single word could be enough to make encouraged to do something better in life. To achieve anything great in life, to achieve success, language plays a very important role in the lives of people (Ellis, 2019). Individualization of instructions is necessary for a proper acquirement of skills, abilities and capabilities in youngsters along with the thorough understanding of belief in purpose of programs or initiatives regarding the language skills. The related roles of language are described by many of the language theories and three of which are discussed below.

- **Piaget theory**

Piaget expressed the relation of social interaction and cognitive growth. As per Piaget, interaction is something that is required to sort out all the instability of the expressions or symbols that are being developed individually. The significance of a language is associated with social interaction according to Piaget. Not just this, but he also expressed that there is an association between the language and logical understandings' development. He connected the significance of language to the cognitive growth. According to him, language is somehow connected to the development of intellectual growth in people. As per Piaget, language is essentially a social aspect, in part because of the traditional form of words, which is critical for conceptual development. As per him, language was simply a mechanism for youngsters to express or define their familiar surroundings and cognitive growth and it did not aid in the development of thinking (Barrouillet, 2015).

- **Vygotsky's theory**

According to him, the concern he expressed was the relation between language and development of learning. He was excited to find out that how various languages could influence the thinking of an individual. His theory regards language as the main means of communication. The communication he meant was the social one, progressing to include both language and intellect. According to him, a word which lacks the meaning or idea in easy terms, is actually a useless thing as well as an idea un-embodied in words stays just a shadow. Significance of words as a miniature of human awareness was highlighted by him. He claimed that where the idea meets actuality as well as expression is the speech. The youngsters' acquired language patterns sets the basics of his thinking. The pattern of youngster's daily language used by them is actually seems to be used firstly by them for basic social

contact but then it ultimately becomes the basis of the youngsters' cognition (Pathan, et al., 2018).

- Chomsky's theory

Chomsky's definition of competence focuses on basic grammar rules. He believed that study of language is mainly concerned with a suitable speaker and the listener in an entirely homogeneous linguistic community who understands his language beautifully and is unlikely to be affected by grammatically meaningless situations such as memory errors, interruptions, and shift patterns in attentiveness, and mistakes in implementing his language skills in overall performance. Chomsky said that a primitive form of language is being stored by the human brain. And, only humans are capable enough to have the language skills. According to him, language is the ability to communicate, interact and understand each other's ideas. No doubt, people can have the exact same knowledge or understanding, but there could be a noticeable variation in their capability to convey or express it. Chomsky claims that the intellect includes unique elements and he termed it as "language element" (Horrocks, 2014).

### **Language Learning Strategies**

The preferred technique to understand the phenomenon of learning a foreign language is to examine the learners' language learning strategies. In addition, language learning strategies are divided into three categories. The categories "cognitive strategies" refer to how students think regarding their learning, "metacognitive strategies" are related to how students are able to manage their own learning course, and finally "social strategies" involve how they engage with others through language (Sanchez & Caceras, 2017).

### **Teaching Young Learners**

Teaching a foreign language to youngsters differs significantly from teaching it to adults. As learners, youngsters are frequently more energetic and eager. They are restless, quickly bored, and often lose interest in the subject. Because of these distinctions, there is always the question of whether young learners can learn a language more rapidly and easily than elders (Copland, et al., 2014). Because their brains are still able to apply the mechanism that aids native language learning, young learners can learn a foreign language proficiently before adulthood. To reach into the minds of youngsters, instructors must be very skilled. To do so, they must understand not just how young learners acquire, but also the most successful teaching methods.

### **Learner Strategies for Young Learners**

Make younger students read and comprehend text, help them in remembering language and information, make them to create helping notes, make them motivate and encouraged to learn the skills, give them enough time to absorb the knowledge, interact with them friendly are all the important strategies to teach young learner (Nisbet & Shucksmith, 2017).

### **Topic and its Significance**

Because language skills are the foundation for educational excellence and literacy, they should be robust. It aids youngsters in improving their reading and speaking abilities. It also contributes in the development of the youngsters' self-esteem. The topic which is to be discussed in this paper is how the foreign language learning impacts the performance of the foreign youngsters who do not have effluent skills of foreign language because of the different mother or native language. This piece of paper will focus on why and how teachers' implementation of learning strategies in foreign language learning affects youngster' learning abilities. The case is extremely important to debate because many teachers and students believe that communication is a necessary and significant aspect of teaching, especially while studying in another country. It is because being able to explain yourself orally in a foreign place is extremely vital, and as a result, students are encouraged to engage in the use of a foreign language. The research will expose us to a wide range of perspectives and new ideas. It would aid in the development of discernment and logical abilities in order to comprehend the reasons for the topic in question. In the research process, curiosity would be rewarded.

### **Aims of the Study**

The overall purpose of the work or study is to enhance the knowledge about the topic of learning strategies of foreign language learning of youngsters. The aims of the study include:

- Understanding the impact of leaning strategies of foreign language learning of youngsters.
- Exploring the fact that how these strategies help the young learners in order to improve their learning skills.
- Exploring the fact that how instructional implementation of such strategies help in teaching young learners.
- To understand the relationship between such strategies and foreign language learning of youngsters.

### **Limits of the Study**

There is no such thing as a flawless study that encompasses all of the study's potential details. The study's limitations are attributable to inefficiencies or flaws, which could be attributed to a lack of resources. This study relies on having access to youngsters, foreign institutions, data, or records, and while access is limited due to the researcher being in the same region, hence, the study's method is qualitative rather than quantitative. There is a one problem with the youngsters that some of them do not cooperate with seriousness as that of the adults because the adults have more understanding about how research studies are being done and what its significance is whereas youngsters somehow lack this point.

### **Procedures**

The study will be conducted in accordance with established procedures. To begin, the problem must be identified, in this case, why and how teachers' implementation of learning strategies in foreign language learning affects students' learning abilities. A complete evaluation of literature review will be added, followed by the formulation of a research design that comprises the qualitative study, the results, the discussion, and the conclusion.

### **Literature Review**

According to Hardan, (2013) either it is a native language or a foreign language, a proper strategy is required to learn a language. The strategy means what type of step should be used and how they are used in order to achieve the learning purpose. There are variety of strategies which humans adopt to learn and master a language, some of which are effective and some of which are not. Different researchers have different definitions of the learning strategies. They defined the learning strategies in various ways. The modest of the definition is “steps that are followed to acquire learning” defined by Brown in 1980. Then Chamot in 1987 defined learning strategies as the process of approaches that are being adopted by the students in order to learn the language and remember of both the language and information about it.

### **Types of Learner Strategies**

According to Montano, (2017) there are many types of learning strategies which are classified into two main categories by Rubin in 1987. The two categories are directly strategies and indirectly strategies. There are further three main types of strategies which are being used by the learners in order to learn a language. The strategies include learning strategies, communication strategies and social strategies. Learning strategies are actually

of two main types that contribute directly to the language learning process which includes cognitive learning strategies and meta-cognitive learning strategies (Winne, 2017). The next part of the literature review will describe all of the types of strategies which are used to learn a foreign language by youngsters. There are total six types of these strategies. Three types fall under the direct strategies and rest of the three falls under the indirect strategies.

- Memorization strategies

According to Kikas and Jogi, (2016) these are strategies that are being used to recall information effectively and more efficiently in the learning process in order to recover and transfer the information that is required for the future use. It aids the youngsters to store the information they learn in their memory. And, when the information is required for the use in the future, memorization aids the students to retrieve the information back. For example, the semantic map of a collection of nouns or verbs that explains the relationship between the various phrases.

- Cognitive strategies

As per Moeller and Catalano, (2015) the strategies which are being used by younger students in order to manipulate the acquired language properly by using all the approaches are called cognitive strategy. This involves reasoning, analysis and coming to the results or conclusions. If taken an example, it will be the use of approaches to practice the foreign language and using the dictionary to find out the meaning of tougher words.

- Compensation strategies

According to Syafryadin et al. (2020) the strategies acquired by the youngsters to compensate the information or knowledge which is missing in the foreign language they are learning because of the not enough presence of vocabulary to them is called compensation strategies. This aids the younger students to learn and write the language even if there is limited vocabulary they have. If taken an example, it would be the use of language hints to guess the meanings of the words that helps in compensating the lacked vocabulary.

- Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies are those strategies which are implemented by the younger students in order to get help in their learning process by proper arrangement, proper planning, assessment and evaluation of their learning of foreign language which helps the younger learners to have a control in their foreign language learning. In this type of strategy, students are allowed to change the planning of how their learning strategies should be in their learning process (Rahimi & Katal, 2012). For instance, reviewing the already learnt information and then decide on what kind of knowledge should they focus on.

- **Affective strategies**  
The strategies which are being used by the younger students to take control of their feelings, emotions, beliefs, motivations and attitudes are called affective strategies. Such type of strategies has an effective impact on foreign language learning process since the students have the capability to manage their emotions. For instance, younger students could laugh in order to calm their minds to get better involve in the learning process and get achievement (Zakaria et al., 2019)
- **Social strategies**  
The techniques that children employ to expose themselves to the outside world where they engage in social interaction and practice using a foreign language might be possible. Since, language learning always involves the people in the form of social behavior; this strategy could be very beneficial. For instance, talking with native speakers, questioning them, learning information from them, and working in groups with them can assist language learners to flourish their language (Hardan, 2013).

### **Factors Affecting Choice of Language Learning Strategies**

Since the 1970s, a lot of research has focused their attention on the idea of "learning strategy," and most of them had already made an effort to describe and classify language learning strategies. Even though there is disagreement over the correct meaning of a learning strategy, few academics disagree that it is among the most significant personal characteristics in second language learning and that using the right learning strategies can improve learners' language learning. This part offers a review of studies that have looked into the three factors affecting the choice of language learning strategies.

- **Motivation**  
In foreign language learning, there has been a lot of focus on the relationship between motivation and language learning strategy. Motivation is "a fundamental component that impacts the individual's levels of effectiveness in learning a foreign language," according to Gardner (2010). Attempts to acquire the language, an interest in learning the language, and perspectives regarding learning the language are the three components that make up motivation, according to him.
- **Gender**  
Another important aspect influencing learners' selection of strategies is thought to be their gender. Various empirical researches show that females employ more learning strategies than males. Ehrman and Oxford (1989), for instance, discovered that females used four strategies more frequently than males. Likewise, Hong-Nam and Leavell (2006) discovered that females employed strategies

often than males did, and that females primarily used social and metacognitive strategies in their research of the strategy use of 55 ESL students.

- **Personality of learners**

The relationship between personality and the usage of learning strategies has also been investigated in language learning strategy research. Jung's (1971) distinction between openness to experience and social anxiety has gained widespread acceptance as a personality trait. Successful language learners "select tactics to match their personalities," claim Oxford and Nyikos. Ehrman and Oxford (1990) discovered that type of personality impacted the learners' preferences of strategies in a study of 20 individuals learning Turkish in the US: extroverts chose social strategies while introverts favored to practice privately.

### **The Role of Teachers in Strategies Training**

According to Arulsevi, (2016) language teachers who want to educate their students about how to use language learning strategies should get to know their students' passions, driving forces, and learning preferences. By monitoring how the youngsters behave in class, the teacher can determine what language acquisition strategies they seem to be employing already. A brief assessment that students can complete at the beginning of the training to identify themselves and their language learning can be prepared by the teacher in addition to evaluating the students' conduct in class. The teachers could have sufficient knowledge of the students' objectives, interests, language learning approaches, and comprehension of the course being taught. In his book, Cohen (1998) discusses the areas of learning strategies, their application in foreign languages, and the significance of the role that teachers play in strategy training. He expresses the importance of strategy training and assigns larger role to a student in the class who really can progress language and help other students to identify their individual strengths and weaknesses in the process of learning, which inspires other students to "acquire the skills" and "learn how and when to use strategies" (Liu, 2010). The right strategies should be selected depending on the language task's criteria, the learners' aims, and their learning preferences. During language sessions, students should have lots of chances to practice their strategies. Interpretations, brochures, exercises, discussion, and resources for further reading and self-study should all be included in strategy training. Since different students prefer or require different tactics for different activities, strategy instruction should be somewhat personalized. Students should have a way to assess their own development, the effectiveness of the training, and the worth of the skills they learn (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011).

### **Methodology**

The type of methodology used to collect information and data is qualitative



method. The purpose of qualitative method is to have a better understanding of the concerned topic which in this case is whether learning strategies help the youngsters to better learn foreign language and if there is any role of teachers in it. The aim of the study is to know the personal experiences of the youngsters that are currently learning the foreign language by the help of learning strategies.

### **Participants**

The participants chosen for the qualitative study are from one of the schools of the same region. The younger students those who were the part of the foreign language learning programs in that institute were the participants. The foreign language they were learning is English. The teachers helping the youngsters teaching the foreign language also participated. It was being asked to the teachers from the language teaching program to select some of those youngsters who were getting help with the learning strategies which the teachers implemented in their course. There were students of age 10-14.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of the students was 20 and the teachers were 3 and they were asked to take participation in the study. The population was totally those who were a part of the foreign language learning program.

### **The Instrument of the Study**

Information about the youngsters who were the part of the foreign language learning program was collected by using specific instruments, for example, interviews, audio self-reports before and after a language class. Oral presentation was also taken two times, first to the researcher before presented in classroom and then the presentation in the classroom to evaluate the impact of learning strategies. The presentations were being recorded to analyses and evaluated in depth if the strategies were worthy enough of implementation. For teachers, there were only the interviews being conducted.

### **Data Collection**

Interviews with learners served as the primary source of the data. Oral presentations and audio-only reports served as additional data sources. From teachers, only interviews were the source of the data collection that was chosen.

- Interviews  
Students who were learning a foreign language were being interviewed. The interviews contained questions that could aid in gathering qualitative data and

whether the learning strategies were really helping them in learning process. The teachers were interviewed to know about how they implemented the strategies and if there were any challenges they faced as well as how much improvement they noticed in their younger students.

- **Presentations**

Youngsters were required to give some oral presentations during the foreign language learning program. One of their foreign language presentations was to be recorded, they were told. Two segments made up the oral presentation. The presentation was first given to the researcher before being presented in their class.

- **Self-recorded audios**

In order to learn more about how students, feel about their learning process, what their attitudes and opinions are regarding the learning strategies, self-reports were gathered. Participants were prompted to describe their opinions both before and after an adoption of learning strategies.

### **Data Analysis**

According to the methodology, the participants in this study were younger students and teachers who were a part of foreign language learning. During this process, a number of instruments, some of which were previously covered, were utilized to collect qualitative data. Youngsters who were learning foreign language by the help of learning strategies assisted in the collection and analysis of data. Teachers in that particular program were also the part of it.

### **Ethical Considerations**

When doing the qualitative research, a particular set of guidelines were kept in mind. Some ethical principles were deemed important to uphold while data was being collected. These ethical issues include voluntary participation, which means that participants' decision to participate in the study is entirely up to them; they are willing to terminate at any time. The other ethical need is known as informed consent, and it states that participants must be aware of the study's purpose before giving their assent. Participants' privacy should also never be violated in any way.

### **Results**

The findings from the interviews, self-reports, and presentations are presented in this section of the methodology. With the aid of language learning strategies in a language learning program, the analyses' findings were attained with 20 students learning a foreign language. Open-ended questions were asked during the interviews, self-reports contained

data on the learning techniques' efficacy, and presentations aided in determining whether the learning strategies had a positive or negative influence on the younger learners. Younger students admitted during the interview that they were worried about their limited proficiency in the language before getting themselves enrolled in the foreign language learning program and that they just wanted to acquire the learning skills. They acknowledged that their proficiency of foreign language was less before adopting the strategies by the help of their teachers. Before that, inadequate proficiency of foreign language caused them to feel uneasy and apprehensive when speaking in front of the class or others. Self-reports were used to collect and save the data of the youngsters which can be listened again and again for evaluation. Presentations were taken from the younger students to check the impact of learning strategies and it was found that they are learning very fast and with great efficacy. The interviews from the teachers provided us with the findings that they have to face some challenges in terms of helping their younger students but it is worth the results. They try to cooperate with the youngsters with full heart and friendly. They help the students in choosing the suitable strategy for the youngsters. It was found that many of them are interested in learning a foreign language by selecting "social strategies". Some are gaining fast knowledge with "cognitive strategies" and some like to adopt "metacognitive strategies".

### **Discussion**

Learning strategies are the precise steps taken to help learners learn a foreign language more effectively. Initially in the 1970s, it was thought that language students took a more active role in their very own learning. In accordance with this idea, Rubin looked into what 'excellent language learners' did to aid their acquisition in 1975. Some of their study strategies defined as "the procedures or instruments that a learner may employ to gain knowledge" was reported as a result of this inquiry. According to Rubin, effective language learners are excellent personalities who have a great capacity to discuss and will make an effort to do so. Both the idea and the form of their communication are taken into consideration. Additionally, they work on their own language and keep an eye on others'. Youngsters are especially the learners who can quickly learn a foreign language than the adults. Younger students are appreciated for speaking a language well when they turn older, and if they do not speak a language with that much proficiency, they are being taught. Specific acts, attitudes, strategies, or approaches known as language learning strategies help language learners learn the language effectively. All young language learners employ language learning strategies to aid in their learning. The idea that all language learners use the same effective language learning strategies or should be taught how to use and develop the same strategies to become successful learners is not necessary given that factors such as age, gender, personality, motivation, cognitive style, excitement, anxiety, etc., influence

how language learners learn the language skills. The significance and purpose of the strategies used in particular activities, as well as the possibility of using them in various circumstances, can be explained to learners during the training. When teaching new methods, it is necessary to give the learners a task to do without any prior instruction before commenting on what they did to complete it. On the basis of the students' observations, the teacher can then talk about how beneficial certain strategies are. Other beneficial solutions for the activity at hand can be introduced by teachers, who can then encourage students to apply the new skills to comparable activities.

### Conclusion

It is concluded that young learners have the capability of acquiring a foreign language more efficiently like adults. For this, language learning strategies help the youngsters to motivate, encourage and push them to learn a language by the help of the teachers. Learning strategies aids the youngsters to store the information they learn in their memory. And, when the information is required for the use in the future, memorization aids the students to retrieve the information back. All young language learners must employ language learning strategies to aid in their learning. By monitoring how the youngsters behave in class, the teacher can determine what language acquisition strategies they seem to be employing already. Because their brains are still able to apply the mechanism that aids native language learning, young learners can learn a foreign language proficiently before adulthood. To reach into the minds of youngsters, teachers must be very skilled. To do so, they must understand not just how young learners acquire, but also the most successful teaching methods.

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