



APPLICATION-ORIENTED REVIEW ON LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: First keyword, Second keyword, Third keyword, Fourth keyword, Fifth keyword

A. INTRODUCTION

Language learning is a complex process that requires learners to actively engage with linguistic input, process information, and apply knowledge in real communication. Over the past four decades, research has consistently highlighted the importance of language learning strategies (LLS) in supporting this process (Griffiths, 2003; Oxford R. L, 1990). LLS are generally define as “specific action, behaviours, steps or techniques that students use to improve their progress in developing second language skills” (Oxford 1990, p.8). The concept of language learning strategies emerged from efforts to understand why some learners achieve greater success than others in acquiring additional languages (Lismay & Zubaidah, 2019). Early investigations emphasised what “good language learners” do differently (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975), leading to systematic taxonomies of strategies for cognitive, metacognitive, and social use (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990).



Despite their recognised value in second language acquisition (SLA) research, the practical application of LLS in classroom settings remains inconsistent. Over time, LLS research has shifted from descriptive studies to applications in classrooms, policy context, and technology-mediated learning (Cohen & Macaro, 2007). Many teachers are familiar with the concept of strategies but are unsure how to integrate them into everyday instruction (Cohen & Macaro, 2007). Similarly, learners often use strategies unconsciously, without reflecting on their effectiveness. This highlights the need for a review that not only summarises LLS research but also emphasises practical implications for classroom practice. Therefore, the purpose of this article is: (1) to provide an overview of key theoretical frameworks and research findings on language learning strategies, and (2) to explore how these strategies can be meaningfully applied in language classroom to support learner development.

The global spread of English-medium instruction presents challenges for students who must simultaneously master content and language (Macaro, 2018). LLS such as note taking, inferencing, and collaborative learning can help students cope with EMI demands (Cohen & Macaro, 2007). Translingual and decolonial approaches also encourage strategy use that value learners' linguistic repertoires (Xie & Sun, 2024). Moreover, explicit strategy instruction helps learners become aware of practice and demand strategies across task (Cohen, 2011; Oxford, 2017). Studies show that guided practice in listening (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010) and reading (Zhang & Wu, 2009) improve learners' metacognitive control. Teachers play a critical role in scaffolding this process (Griffiths, 2003).

Affective factors shape how learners engage with strategies. self-regulated learning (Panadero, 2017) emphasis metacognitive and motivational regulation, while language anxiety influences learners' choice of coping strategies (Kim et al., 2025). Effective instruction integrates cognitive and affective strategies to build resilience. In addition, (Benson, 2011) and (Griffiths, 2003) stress that strategies underpin learner autonomy, encouraging reflective practice, self-assessment, and goal setting enables learners to continue developing strategies beyond the classroom, contributing to lifelong learning. This review is important for several reasons. First, despite decades of research on language learning strategies, there remains a noticeable gap between theoretical knowledge and classroom practice. Second, the increasing prevalence of English-medium instruction and multilingual classrooms requires learner to manage complex cognitive, linguistic, and effective demands simultaneously. A review on LLS provides idea



into how strategic learning can support learners' academic success and psychological well-being in such contexts. So that, this review contributes to a more coherent and practically relevant understanding of language learning strategies, offering implication for teachers, curriculum designers, and researchers seeking to enhance sustainable and lifelong language learning.

B. METHOD

In conducting this review, a qualitative systematic literature review (thematic SLR) approach was employed to ensure a comprehensive and rigorous synthesis of relevant studies. The review process consisted of four stages. First, relevant literature was identified through targeted searches on Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and reputable journal database such as DOAJ and SINTA using keywords related to language learning strategies and their practical implications. Second, the search results were screened to remove duplicates and assess titles and abstracts for relevance to the research theme. Full text articles were evaluated for methodological clarity, relevance and contribution to the topic, last, studies that met the inclusion criteria were selected for detailed synthesis. A total 35 studies, published between 2015-2025, were included in the analysis. The inclusion criteria focused on English language publications that directly addressed the theme of application-oriented research on language learning strategies.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

While the literature identifies numerous strategies, this section focuses on five broad categories with clear practical relevance: cognitive, metacognitive, social, affective, and technology-enhanced strategies. each is briefly described, supported by research and linked to classroom application.

Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies involve direct manipulation of the language, such as repetition, summarisation, translation, note-taking, and analysing patterns (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).



These strategies enable learners to process and internalise new knowledge. Studies show that learners who regularly use cognitive strategies such as summarising texts or creating concept maps achieve greater retention and comprehension (Griffiths, 2003). In the classroom, teachers can encourage students to take notes in the target language, practice paraphrasing, and use translation judiciously as a bridge to comprehension. Activities such as guided summarisation, dictogloss, and problem-solving tasks encourage active use of cognitive strategies.

Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies relate to higher-order thinking skills, including planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning. These strategies are strongly associated with learner autonomy and success (Wenden, 1998). Learners who engage in metacognitive activities such as setting goals, monitoring progress, and reflecting on outcomes tend to perform better academically (Zhang & Wu, 2009). In the classroom, teachers can model metacognitive strategies by thinking aloud during tasks, encourage goal-setting at the beginning of a lesson, and use reflective journals or self-assessment checklists. For example, after a listening activity, learners might evaluate which strategies helped them understand and what they could do differently next time.

Social strategies

Social strategies emphasise interaction with others as a tool for learning, including asking question, seeking clarification, cooperating with peers, and engaging in collaborative learning. Socially oriented strategy use correlates with improved communicative competence and reduced anxiety (Cohen, 2011). Collaborative learning environments encourage students to negotiate meaning and co-construct knowledge. In the classroom, teachers can design pair and group tasks that require cooperation, such as project-based learning, peer teaching, and role plays. Encouraging students to asks questions and provide feedback to each other promote an interactive classroom culture.

Affective strategies

Affective strategies focus on managing emotions, motivation, and attitudes toward learning. These include positive self-tasks, relaxation, and anxiety-reduction techniques. Studies have shown that learners with strong affective regulation persist longer and maintain motivation even in challenging tasks (Oxford R. L, 2017). In the classroom, teachers can incorporate short



mindfulness activities before speaking tasks, encourage students to use affirmations, and create a supportive environment where mistakes are seen as part of learning. For instance, confidence circle or peer support groups can help reduce language anxiety.

Technology-Enhanced strategies

With the rapid growth of digital tools, technology-enhanced strategies represent an emerging area of LLS. Learners now use apps, online dictionaries, podcast, gamified platforms, and AI-assisted tools to regulate their learning. Digital strategy use has been linked to higher learner autonomy and motivation, especially in EFL context (Godwin-Jones, 2018). In the classroom, teachers can integrate technology by assigning digital vocabulary logs, encouraging learners to use language-learning apps for spaced repetition, or creating collaborative online forums for peer interaction. Importantly, students should be guided in selecting affective tools rather than being left to experiment blindly.

Discussion

Despite decades of research, LLS continue to evolve in response to changing educational and technological contexts. One of the most promising directions is the integration of technology, where artificial intelligence and adaptive learning environments can personalise strategy use and provide tailored feedback (Du & Daniel, 2024). Similarly, contextualised strategy use is becoming increasingly important as English-medium instruction (EMI) and multilingual classrooms expand, requiring flexible and culturally responsive approaches to teaching strategies (Macaro, 2018; Xie & Sun, 2024). Another growing area of focus is the affective and motivational dimensions of learning. As awareness of learners well-being continues to increase, affective strategies deserve more explicit attention in both research and pedagogy (Kim et al., 2025). These developments highlight the need for future research to bridge theory and practice by exploring how strategies operate dynamically across tasks, communities, and technological ecosystems.

Looking ahead, several promising directions emerge for the application of LLS. In EMI and English for specific purposes (ESP) contexts, strategies tailored to academic reading, professional communication, and discipline-specific vocabulary are becoming increasingly important. In addition, culturally responsive approaches are necessary to ensure that strategy



instruction does not simply impose Western-based models but instead recognises and validates local learning traditions. Such as shift to meet broader calls for decolonial approaches to language education, which emphasise inclusivity and sensitivity to diverse epistemologies. Furthermore, the integration of technology and AI into language learning holds significant potential, as digital tools and AI-based tutors can scaffold strategy use in more personalised ways. For example, personalised feedback from AI systems could help learners identify which strategies are most effective for them and adapt accordingly.

At the same time, more longitudinal and classroom-based research is needed to deepen understanding of how learners' strategy use evolves over time, particularly in authentic educational settings. Such studies would provide a more accurate and nuanced picture of how strategies contribute to long-term language development compared to short-term, experimental findings. Nevertheless, researchers and practitioners must also be mindful of the challenges surrounding LLS application. One key challenge is the influence of cultural and contextual variation, which shapes how learners perceive and use strategies. What proves effective in one context may not translate directly to another (Griffiths, 2003). For instance, strategies that prioritise individual reflection may seem unfamiliar in collectivist cultures where collaborative learning is more prominent, thus requiring careful adaptation of instruction to specific educational environments.

In addition, methodological and pedagogical challenges persist. Research in this field has long relied on self-report instruments such as the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which may not accurately capture learners' real-time strategy deployment (Thomas et al., 2024). Complementary approaches, including observational and longitudinal designs, are therefore essential for generating more ecological point of view. Teacher readiness represents another critical factor, as many educators lack formal training in strategy instruction and may regard it as competing with curricular content. Professional development initiatives must thus prioritise equipping teachers with both theoretical knowledge and practical tools for embedding LLS into instructional practice. Finally, there is a risk that strategy instruction, if implemented in a rigid and prescriptive manner, will be perceived by learners as artificial or mechanical. To maximise its effectiveness, strategy training must remain flexible, ensuring that strategies are internalised as authentic resources rather than imposed techniques.



D. CONCLUSION

Language learning strategies remain a powerful construct for understanding and supporting learners. From early descriptive studies to contemporary applications in EMI, technology-enhanced learning, and affective domain. Strategies provide both a lens for research and a toolkit for practice. Teachers, learners, and policymakers can benefit from integrating strategy-based instruction into curricula, leveraging technology, and fostering autonomy to prepare learners for lifelong language development. LLS remain a vital concept for linking theory with classroom practice. Although the field has evolved, moving toward broader frameworks such as self-regulated learning, the practical value of LLS endures. Research consistently shows that learners are trained to use strategies to achieve greater autonomy, motivation and proficiency.

For teachers, the challenge is not only to understand strategies but also to integrate them meaningfully into instruction. Giving a model strategies, embedding them into skills lessons, encouraging reflection, and provide supportive environments are some points that can applied by teachers to empower learners taking greater control of their own learning. At the same time, strategy instruction must be context-sensitive, flexible, and adaptive to the need of different learners. Future direction points to the integration of strategies in EMI/ESP contexts, culturally responsive pedagogy and technology-enhanced learning. Ultimately, LLS should be seen not as an abstract theoretical construct but as a set of practical tools that can help learners navigate the complex journey of language learning. When it applied thoughtfully, strategies not only improve performance but also encourage the confidence and autonomy that lie at the heart of successful lifelong learning.

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