

Learning strategies assignment

[Education](#)



How long should it last? A class? A term? A year? At regular intervals? Etc. • Should the treatment of strategies be implicit (or “blind”) or should it be explicit (“informed” or “strategy-plus-control”)? Or should it be a combination of both approaches? • Should the teacher try to cover a comprehensive list of different strategies, or should the focus be on a limited number of strategies? Bearing in mind these questions as well as the rest of the material studied in this subject, consider the following task that has been adapted from R.

Oxford (“ Language Learning Strategies: What every teacher should know”. 1990: 211). An ancient proverb says, “ Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime”. 1. Explain what this saying means to you in the area of language learning and teaching. Give examples from your own experience, justifying these and backing them up with information from the subject and from your outside readings.

Now consider Tyacke and Mendelsohn’s (1986: 178) response to this proverb: “ But just as there are many different kinds of rods, different kinds of bait and different fishing locations, all of which offer a variety of choices and experiences, there are different ways of learning language. ” 2. What does this mean to you? How does it affect what you think of the proverb as applied to strategy training? 3. What are the pros and cons of conducting strategy training in your opinion? Final del formulario 1. Explain what this saying means to you in the area of language learning and teaching.

Give examples from your own experience, justifying these and backing them up with information from the subject and from your outside readings. An old

proverb states: “ Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime”. Applied to the language teaching and learning field, this proverb might be interpreted to mean that if students are provided with answers, the immediate problem is solved. But if they are taught the strategies to work out the answers for themselves, they are empowered to manage their own learning.

Good teaching involves more than communicating the content of one’s discipline; a good teacher also needs both to motivate students to continue learning and to teach them the skills and strategies needed for continued learning. In this essay I discuss the traditional proverb “ Give a man a fish and he eats for a day, teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime” as applied in the context of strategy training for L2. I will go over the idea that teaching English is like “ giving a man a fish”, and that showing him learning strategies.

That is to say that the best thing when teaching is not to give the student the solution when they do not find it, because this could be the easiest thing for the students, but not the most productive way of learning. Teachers have to give students the ways through which they can achieve the answers by themselves. The proverb specifically applied to language learning and teaching, refers to the learners? need to go beyond formal classroom instruction, to keep learning after class and to learn how to improve English proficiency.

However, teaching how to fish and teaching a foreign language are very different activities which require very different teaching approaches. While

the first can be taught by systematically following clear guidelines, this is not the case in L2. Teaching to fish is to instruct somebody on a technique, L2 teaching is not. Teaching English is like “ giving a man a fish” but presenting him/her learning strategies and giving them opportunities to realize his own is “ to teach him how to fish”. Strategies equip students with learning tools for the rest of their lives.

In my teaching experience I have been concerned mostly with providing students with grammar points and opportunities to practice them in specifically designed tasks. I presented the grammar points using top-down approaches and then showed examples of how native speakers pronounce and use them in real life situations. I used real and pedagogical designed material selected to suit the class learning goals. I was not completely aware of “ learning strategies” as a crucial factor in learning.

I used to engage students in several activities and tasks which included songs, movies, images and individual work. In my opinion, such a great range of resources would be enough to motivate the whole class and to reach the goals. When using songs, for instance, some students got bored after a few minutes although all the class had agreed in selecting one specific song. The same thing happened with regard to readings. In both cases the outcomes were not as expected in terms of motivation and of engaging students in the learning process.

The purpose to make students independent English learners through the acquisition of learning strategies must be based on a clear understanding of their learning styles. Kinesthetic students are likely to get easily distracted in

reading activities and start talking. Those students would be labeled as “distracters”, implying that they are not as good English learners. However, if they were provided with learning strategies and activities that apply to their individual learning preferences they probably would be more receptive.

Now consider Tyacke and Mendelsohn’s (1986: 178) response to this proverb: “ But just as there are many different kinds of rods, different kinds of bait and different fishing locations, all of which offer a variety of choices and experiences, there are different ways of learning language. ” 2. What does this mean to you? How does it affect what you think of the proverb as applied to strategy training? This introduces the learning style issue and expresses how different each individual may learn a second language. There are different typologies and groups in which learning styles have been organized.

A learner might show characteristics of more than one style. Learning style variables have been divided into four categories: physiological, affective, incentive and cognitive. If learning style is mostly preference as most authors seem to agree, one may conclude that there is not a best learning style as there is not a best learning strategy. School practices and social and cultural values tend to validate or appreciate some styles and strategies more than other, but they are not intrinsically “ good” or “ bad”, and for that reason people need to discover their own.

Researches and studies on strategy training do not allow us to be conclusive on what makes strategy training successful. For this reason “ pros” and “ cons” can only be identified looking at the set of each teacher’s principles

and beliefs on what is considered a sound approach to strategy training. Some teachers understand it as presenting students with specific techniques and then making students practice them in specially designed tasks while other are more concerned with helping students to identify their own learning techniques.

Each teacher will find different advantages and disadvantages which are specific to the teaching context. In my opinion good strategy training is based in the following principles, taken from Oxford:

- Should be long term.
- Must focus on raising student? s awareness of language learning strategies.
- Should combine both explicit and implicit approaches.
- Must focus on those strategies needed by students and try to match their learning style.

3. What are the pros and cons of conducting strategy training in your opinion?) Long term strategy training allows students to get in touch with a broader terrain and repertoire of strategies, besides allowing time for the learning process to take place. It must last for at least one year. On the other hand, in long term training, teachers can integrate strategies into regular activities and have time to know better their students. One disadvantage of long term training is that we need to work with the same students for more than two or three terms, but who teaches each level is something teachers cannot decide most of the time.) Raising student? s awareness of language learning strategies helps the learner to become aware of strategy already in use, know how to match strategies with activities, know new strategies and become familiar with their overall schema. It makes the teaching process easier since more independent learners are more likely to develop high levels of proficiency. It provides opportunities for students to reflect on,

verbalize and socialize their experience, raising their awareness of which strategies were useful for which tasks.

One “con” is that some students may be reluctant to become independent from the teacher and do not get interested in the topic. This behavior may be explained by cultural values and idiosyncrasies as by previous experiences in learning. c) Teaching learning strategy should combine both explicit and implicit approaches. The combination of both approaches promotes students’ sense of belonging and self-regulation and helps them to use, identify and develop learning strategies in a systematic way as they learn the target language.

The first approach informs learners of the value and purpose of learning strategies. The second lets teachers elicit the use of specific strategies, but students are not informed of the name, purpose or value of the specific learning strategy. In the direct approach to strategy instruction, the teacher raises learner awareness of the purpose and rationale for strategy use, identifies the specific strategy being used and systematically provides opportunities for practice and self-evaluation.

However, too much explanation may bore or discourage those students with non analytic learning styles. In this case some “blind” and “indirect” training may be desirable. d) Strategy training must focus on those strategies needed by students and try to match their learning style. This way, the teacher can focus on those strategies that fill the needs of his/her students and adapt training to learners’ real communicative needs in their particular situation.

In conclusion, it can be said that learning strategies are essential components of learning that enable students' independency and autonomy. I commented on the idea that teaching English is like "giving a man a fish" but presenting him learning strategies and giving the opportunity to realize his own is "to teach him how to fish". I argued that good strategy training must be long term, focused on those needed by student in specific context and presented in both explicit and implicit ways. BIBLIOGRAPHY Oxford, R. L. (Ed.). (1999).

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