

Strategies-Based Instruction Institute Highlights

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SBI 研究講習会における論点

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Abstract

This paper presents the highlights of the institute attended by the author concerning Strategies-Based Instruction. The institute emphasized how making students aware of the use of strategies in and outside of the classroom can make them more efficient and effective learners of foreign and second languages.

Key words : ESL, foreign language learning, strategies

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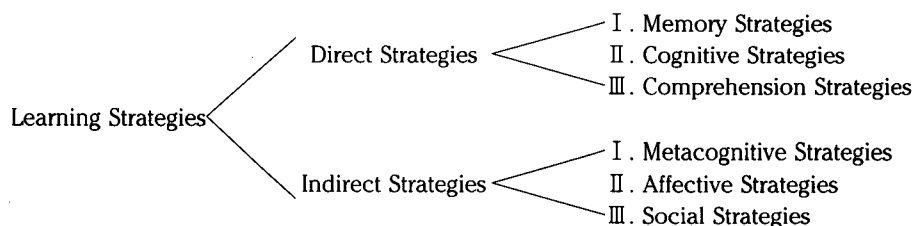
クラス内のみならずその他の場面でも学生が学習法を認識していることが外国語学習および第二言語習得にはより効果的、効率的であることを、一週間にわたる Strategies-Based Instruction の研究会の報告として呈示する。

キーワード : ESL、外国語学習、学習方法

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A Practical Course in Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI)
A Summer Institute for Language Teachers
at The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition
University of Minnesota
July 17–21, 2000

When learning a second or foreign language, individuals employ various ways and means called strategies to help them use and recall the factors of the new language until they develop competency in the language. There are hundreds of strategies, and Rebecca Oxford specifies the types in the chart below which is reproduced from her book, Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know, 1990, page 16.



Among the numerous strategies, some common ones are rhyming, outlining, using gestures, planning, using humor, and asking questions. Strategies Based Instruction (SBI) refers to teaching in such a way that strategies are used efficiently.

The purpose of this 5-day institute was to enhance the participating language teachers' ability in SBI in order to help foreign and second language learners improve their use of the strategies they already know, to help them develop or learn new strategies, and, as a result, to make language learning quicker and easier. The institute, led by Andrew Cohen, Rebecca Oxford, and Susan Weaver included the following key topics.

Day 1 Defining Styles and Strategies

Strategy Problem Sharing

On this day, along with the brief history of learning strategy research, a list of some of the most common strategies was presented. An extensive and helpful list of strategies for each skill area can be found in Appendix G of Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know, 1990. As well, a comparison was made between learning styles and learning strategies. A primary difference being that a learning style is more a matter of personality and not usually consciously chosen, while learning strategies are consciously selected activities for learning or using a language including such things as focusing on key words, using synonyms, clarifying concepts, and using a circumlocution or synonym.

Some example exercises including taking a quiz of unfamiliar vocabulary words and doing a “speaking” model essay were done to help make the participants aware of their own use of strategies for common language learning situations.

Day 2 Learning Style Preferences

Frameworks for Strategy Training

Strategies-Based Instruction Approaches

On the second day, after a review of learning style preferences such as visual, auditory, and hands-on, inventories such as the SILL (Strategies Inventory for Language Learning) and some possible approaches for SBI were discussed. It was pointed out, again, that learning style is mostly innate, but that the strategies chosen by an individual are determined to a certain extent by that individual’s learning style. The SILL is used to help the individual determine what strategies he or she is already using or prefers to use to learn a language. Along with the SILL, in-class exercises can also make the individual aware of available strategies. Some examples given were learning grammar through conversation and relaxation and the use of props to promote speaking. It was also pointed out that when SBI is used, it must be explained early in the course so the students will realize they are using strategies and can plan to use them more effectively.

Day 3 Awareness Raising Techniques

Hands-on Strategy Training Activities

Teacher and Student Roles

The activities for this day centered on even more detailed ways to increase the language learner’s awareness of strategy use and on ways to increase the motivation to use strategies effectively. The use of strategies can be enhanced through internal and external motivation efforts such as attempting to increase self-confidence and the providing of various kinds of rewards. Both the teacher and the learner can create motivation. For instance the teacher can point out how learning the language can help the learner integrate into the culture, how it can help to obtain a better job, or satisfy another cultural interest. The learners can promise themselves a reward for reaching a certain goal, find ways to reduce their anxiety, or review and clarify their beliefs about learning a language. In other words, strategies training can help learners believe they can reach a goal.

Day 4 Designing Strategies-Based Activities

Strategy Assessment Techniques

This session was used to consider possible ways to implement SBI in our individual school curriculums. At the time of the SBI institute, OJJC’s curriculum was in the process of

change, and I felt that we could perhaps add some activities for the students who emphasize the use of visual strategies. For example, in the Core Studies II discussion class, each student could occasionally design a short pictorial quiz on her news report for her partner. This quiz could use either original drawings or pictures from the news materials, perhaps based on key words in the news report. Instead of choosing from written multiple choice answers, the partner would choose answers from the labeled picture answers. This would allow the visual strategies oriented students to determine the answers more successfully but would still encourage later verbalization. In Topic Studies III, which emphasizes listening, students could be encouraged to guess the meaning or intention of what was said from the tone of voice. Or, they could be reminded to look at facial expressions, body language, and hand movements to help interpret the video news report. In general, some of our students, both first and second year, who are having a difficult time with homework might benefit from taking the SILL to see which strategies could help them organize their work more efficiently or help them overcome major time consuming problems. Possibly, a special strategies training course could be set up make the information about strategies more readily available to students. A study meeting could also be held for teachers to help make them aware of the things that can be done in class to enhance the students' strategy awareness.

Day 5 Strategy Review and Debate

Goal-Setting for the Future

An overall review of the material presented during the institute was held and the participants gave their views of which strategies would likely be most practical or successful in the programs they teach in. They were also asked how they planned to implement the SBI in those programs.

The institute program made clear that it is necessary to consider learning from the student's point of view as well as the teacher's and that language learning is a cooperative experience. Overall, the institute was informative, and the materials presented would be adaptable to learners in any foreign language program or those studying on their own.

Works Cited

Oxford, Rebecca L. Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know. New York: Newbury, 1990.