

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY ADULT LEARNERS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Abstract:

Learning a new language is a daunting task, especially when we are adults. The process of language acquisition is complex and requires commitment, time, and effort. Adult learners of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) face myriad challenges as they tread through the learning journey. They have specific needs and motivations for learning English. In view of these complexities, language learning strategies (LLS) are essential for learners to make progress in their learning. This article aims to evaluate the language learning strategies used by adult learners of TESOL, how they are influenced by the context, culture, and personality of the learners.

Keywords: Language learning strategies, adult learners, teaching English, second language, direct strategies.

Language learning strategies are processes or actions that learners use intentionally to improve their language learning, using their cognitive, affective, and social abilities in different ways. According to Oxford and Shearin (1994), LLS refer to "the thoughts, actions, and processes used by learners to assist in the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information that they are learning." There are two types of LLSs such as direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies entail learners' efforts to interact directly with the language in question, while indirect strategies are a process for learning, facilitating, or supporting the acquisition of knowledge in a general sense. Direct strategies include cognitive strategies such as memorizing, inferencing, elaborating, repeating, and the use of dictionaries. Meanwhile, indirect strategies encompass affective strategies such as self-regulation, reducing anxiety, and obtaining social support. Research has revealed that for adult learners of TESOL, the use of direct and indirect strategies is essential. The strategies used by adult learners have been found to be influenced by their context, culture, personality, and motivation.

Contextual factors. Adult learners of TESOL must adapt to a new learning environment, often in a new country, where English might be the primary language. Contextual factors like the teaching methodology, materials provided, language resources available, and assessment methods play a significant role in the use of LLS. For instance, teachers and instructors can provide students with opportunities to practice the language, such as through conversations, writing exercises, and group discussions.

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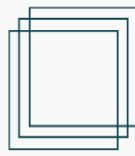
The use of technology resources can also facilitate the learning of TESOL. Interactive whiteboards, online dictionaries, and the internet can be helpful tools for increasing vocabulary, enhancing reading and writing skills, and promoting overall achievement in the language. Research shows that the use of technology resources is highly effective for independent learning and autonomous learning. The culture of the learners can also influence the use of LLSs. For instance, the cultural background of the learners can shape their learning experiences and can affect their motivation for learning TESOL. Teachers must also be mindful of cultural differences in communication styles, as these can influence interactions in the classroom. Another crucial contextual factor that affects the use of LLS is the use of assessment methods. If the assessment is perceived as too difficult or unfair, it can lead to anxiety and reduce motivation. On the other hand, a fair and accurate assessment can encourage learners to use LLSs to improve their knowledge and scores.

Cultural factors like values, beliefs, and communication styles play a significant role in the use of LLSs. For instance, in some cultures, learners may hesitate to ask questions or make mistakes in front of their peers, which can contribute to anxiety and reluctance to participate in the class. In light of these cultural differences, teachers must be sensitive to the learners' expectations, communicate effectively, and facilitate a positive learning environment.

Personality traits and characteristics are also vital for understanding the use of LLSs by adult learners. Research has found that learners who exhibit conscientiousness, openness, extroversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability are more likely to use LLSs. Learners who display neuroticism, on the other hand, might be more prone to anxiety, which can hinder language learning progress.

Motivation is a key motivational factor for adult learners of TESOL, where learners have an intrinsic or extrinsic desire to learn the language. Learners who have an intrinsic motivation to learn TESOL are more likely to use LLSs, exhibit higher levels of achievement, and viewing setbacks as challenges to overcome. In contrast, learners with extrinsic motivation may be more motivated by external factors like grades or certificates, making the use of LLSs less relevant for their learning.

Conclusion. In conclusion, learning a language requires a mix of direct and indirect learning strategies. It is essential to comprehend the contextual, cultural, individual, and motivational factors that influence the use of LLSs and their effectiveness. Recognizing the importance of these aspects can help teachers and instructors support adult learners of TESOL to increase their language learning progress and reach



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