杨筱玲◎著

学习策略在听力和阅读中的运用

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The Application of Learning Strategies in Listening and Reading

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Part One Introducttion

With the fast development of economy and culture, English has gradually become a widely used language in the world. According to the statistics, among the one hundred and ninety two countries in the world, up to forty-five countries use English as their official language. English speakers now total one-third of the world population. English is playing an indispensable role in most international meetings. Therefore, English teaching enjoys a prominent position in broadening people's horizon all over the world because English is becoming an international language. At the same time, the goals as well as the aims of education are to be redefined in the fast developing society. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended in the 1970s that education should place greater emphasis on learning strategies. It also notes that modern definition of illiteracy is no longer the inability to read or write, but the ignorance of how to learn.

In this sense, knowledge is only a means for students. The mastery of learning strategies and the development of a unique and personalized learning technique are the ultimate goals. Teaching language learning strategies is all effective methods to improve the quality of English education, which has already received much attention and is confronted with heated discussions from researchers and educators of the English language teaching.

Strategic training is not a new term in English teaching. There are already some introductions. Since late 1970s and early 1980s, there has been a focus of research in the field of Applied Linguistics being transferred from "how to teach" to "how to learn", from "teachers" to "students". In particular, there is growing interest in studying how individual factors affect learning strategy in reading comprehension. With the same social factors, students have different levels of reading comprehension. How to explain this kind of phenomenon? There are two basic questions that are of concern to students, teachers and researchers: What factors really affect students' choice of reading comprehension-educational system, age, gender, motivation, or learning strategy? How can teachers make students master learning strategy in reading comprehension? The study implies teachers not only pay main attention to the strategies, but also focus on the individual factors simultaneously. Strategic training in the classroom makes it possible for students to learn how to use reading strategies and eventually to improve the ability to reading comprehension. To help students become effective learners is one of the goals of the researches on learning strategies.

However, the study of learning strategies only has its spurt forward in 1990. At

least three monographs on strategies are published in 1990. *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition* by J. O'Malley & A. Chamot, *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know* by Oxford, and A. Cohen's *Language Learning: Insight for Learners, Teachers and Researchers*. These books attempt to base learning strategies on theoretical framework and empirical researches discussing issues like terminology, classification, research methods and especially strategic training. Most important of all, they begin to lay emphasis on the practical application of learning strategies in actual learning activities. It is still not sure whether their researches are suitable for Chinese students because the context and students are maybe different from Chinese ones.

Researchers on learning strategies in China began in the mid-1980s. In 1984, Huang Xiaohua finished her MA thesis—*An Investigation of Learning Strategies in Oral Communication That Chinese EFL Learners in China Employ*. The next year, Huang and M. Van Naersson published "Learning Strategies for Oral Communication" in *Applied Linguistics*, which is the first article on learning strategies published in an international magazine. Then in 1990 another article—"A Study Communication Strategies in Interlanguage Production by Chinese EFL Learners" by Chen Siqing appeared in *Language Learning*. Some other researchers also published their investigations on learning strategies. In 1997 Wen Qiufang published his book: *The Study of English Learning Strategies* that provides valuable theoretical and practical instructions for Chinese teachers and students. In general, they do not pay more heed to learning strategies in reading comprehension and they ignore the individual factors which affect the use of reading strategies that will be investigated in this study.

1.1 Definition of Learning Strategies

Studies and researches about learning strategies have been performed out for a few decades. And there are different findings that have been probed into. While one thing which is widely recognized is that the application of proper strategies can enhance learners' study capability.

The current chapter will begin with providing working denominations for learning

strategic terminology since the terminology isn't always uniform, some using the term learning strategies, others learner strategies, and still others language learning strategies. Here this chapter will work out a uniform terminology with learning strategies to avoid confusion. There are four major issues to be discussed, they are behavior or mental activity; consciousness or unconsciousness factors; tactics, techniques, approaches or skills; indirect or direct effect. And in this section learning strategies will be mentioned with the classifications of Rubin's, Oxford's and O'Malley & Chamot's.

Researchers define learning strategies in various ways. Among them, Rubin looks on learning strategies as the factors that directly influence learning. Stern distinguishes learning strategies from techniques while Chamot thinks they are the same. Weinstein & Mayer & Oxford focus on the general aspect of strategies by defining them as behaviors and thoughts or actions that learners use to facilitate learning. Cohen gives a detailed definition. In his opinion, learning strategies are those processes that are consciously selected by learners to enhance learning. Researchers have been discussing controversial points out of the differences about definitions. Among them, there are four major issues. The first issue is whether strategy behaviors are part of our mental activities. Then, it is whether they are conscious or unconscious. The third issue is whether learning strategies are general approaches to learning or technique in particular areas of language learning. The last issue is that learning strategies have a direct or an indirect effect on interlanguage development. The researches' definitions of language learning strategies are as follows.

Table 1.1 Definitions of Language Learning Strategies

Date	Author	Brief Definitions
1983	FaerchClaus and Kasper	An attempt to develop linguistic and socio-linguistic competence in the target language.
1983	Stem	Particular forms of observable learning behavior, more or less consciously the learner.
1986	Weinstein	Behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning, intending to influence the learners' encoding process.
1986	Weden and Rubin	Any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use and the information of Rubin's.

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(to be Continued)

Date	Author	Brief Definitions
1990	O'Malley and Chamot	The special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them learn, comprehend, or retain new information.
1989 1992 1993	Oxford	Specific actions taken to the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, more transferable to new situations; Tools for self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability.
1997	Ellis	Particular approaches or techniques that learner employ to try to learn L2. They can be behavioral or mental.
1999	Chamot Bamhardt El-dinary. and Robbins	Procedures or techniques that learners can use to facilitate a learning task.
2000	Cohen and Domyei	The conscious and semi-conscious thoughts and behaviors used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and understanding of a target language.

With so many different definitions, maybe the best solution is to list the main characteristics of learning strategies. Ellis once induces a profile of generally accepted characteristics:

1. Strategies refer to both general approaches and specific actions or techniques used to learn a second language.

2. Strategies are problem-orientated: the learners deploy a strategy to overcome a few particular learning problems.

3. Learners are generally aware of the strategy use and can identify what the strategies consist of if the learners are asked to pay attention to what they are doing or thinking.

4. Strategies involve linguistic behavior (such as requesting the name of an object) and non-linguistic behavior (such as pointing at an object so as to be told its name).

5. Linguistic strategies can be performed in the first language and in the second

language.

6. Some strategies are behavioral while others are mental. Thus, some strategies are directly observable, while others are not.

7. In the main study, strategies contribute indirectly to learning by providing learners with data about the second language that they can then progress. However, some strategies may also contribute directly (for instance, memorization strategies directed at specific lexical items or grammatical rules).

8. Strategy use varies considerably as a result of both the kinds of tasks and the learners engaged in the individual learner preferences.

From what Ellis depicts, we can see that there are a number of basic characteristics in generally accepted view of learning strategies, which can serve as a uniform definition of the term. Learners generate first, learning strategies; they are steps or techniques taken by language learners. Second, learning strategies enhance language learning and help develop language competence, as reflected in the learners' skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing a second language or foreign language. Third, learning strategies may be visible (behaviors, steps, techniques, etc.) or invisible (thought, mental process). Fourth, learning strategies may be transferable, as to reading tasks, the young prefer meaning-focused strategy while the old prefer to form-focused strategy.

1.2 Classification of Learning Strategies

Different scholars classify in different ways because of the different criteria that they use. For example, Wong-Fillmore, Tarone, Rubin, Oxford, O'Malley & Chamot, Wenden, Ellis, etc. So it is difficult to compare strategies reported in one study with those reported in another, but most of classifications of learning strategies are without many differences from each other. Rubin's, Oxford's, O'Malley & Chamot's classifications of learning strategies will be handled because they are systematic and influential.

1.2.1 Rubin's view

Rubin is one of the pioneers in the field of strategies. He divides strategies into

two groups: direct strategies and indirect strategies. The former that directly influences the second language learning process includes guessing, memorization, deduction, generation and practice; the latter that indirectly influences the second language learning process includes creating opportunities for practice, for communication, for listening to the radio and so on. She further identifies strategies into three kinds: learning strategies, communication strategies and social strategies. Cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies constitute learning strategies. Learning strategies refer to strategies that learners employ to develop the language system and that directly affect learning. Cognitive strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation or synthesis of learning strategies and that include six general strategies, namely, clarification/verification, guessing/inductive inference, deductive reasoning, practice, memorization and monitoring, while metacognitive strategies are used by learners to monitor, oversee, regulate their learning process through planning, monitoring and evaluating. They also involve knowledge about cognitive process. Communication strategies are taken by learners to deal with problems of communication that have arisen in their interactive communication. Social strategies are opportunities learners create to facilitate learning. Both communication and social strategies indirectly affect language learning. For example, many learners may use avoidance strategy to avoid uncomfortable words, phrases or topics. This communication can promote communication, but it is not relate directly to learning. Opportunities only put learners in an environment where practice is possible.

Table 1.2 Rubin's classification of Learning Strategies

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Strategies</td><td rowspan="2">Directive Strategies</td><td rowspan="2">Learning Strategies</td><td>Cognitive Strategies</td></tr>
<tr><td>Metacognitive Strategies</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Indirective Strategies</td><td>Communication Strategies</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Social Strategies</td></tr>
</table>

1.2.2 Oxford's View

According to Oxford's framework demonstrated in 1990, in view of the relationship between the materials and strategies, accompanied by the basis of direct and indirect influence on language learning through learning strategies, Oxford also

splits strategies into two categories: direct and indirect strategies. The former is consistent of strategies that directly involves the target language in the sense that they require mental processing of the language; while the latter offers indirect support for language learning without directly involving the target language by focusing, planning, evaluating and seeking opportunities and other meanings.

Furthermore, Oxford subdivides direct strategies into three subtypes (see Table 1.3): memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies. Memory strategies help learners enter information in long-term memory and retrieve it when it is necessary to communicate. Cognitive strategies involve formation and revision of internal mental models. Compensation strategies are used to cover or overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication. At the same time, she also divides indirect strategies into three subtypes: metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies help learners regulate and self-direct their learning. Affective strategies are related to learners' emotional requirements such as confidence or courage. Social strategies lead to increasing interaction with others to facilitate their learning.

Table 1.3 Oxford's Classification of Learning Strategies

Learning Strategies	Direct Strategies	Cognitive Strategies	Creating mental linkages; Applying images mad sounds; Reviewing well; Employing action.
		Memory Strategies	Practicing; Receiving and sending message; Strategies; Analyzing and reasoning; Creating; Structure for input and output.
		Compensation Strategies	Guessing intelligently; Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing.
	Indirect Strategies	Metacognitive Strategies	Centering the learning; Arranging and planning the learning; Evaluating the learning process.
		Affective Strategies	Lowering the degree of anxiety; Self-encouraging; Taking control of the emotional temperature.
		Social Strategies	Asking questions; Cooperating with others; Emphasizing communication with others.

1.2.3 O'Malley & Chamot's View

Based on the information processing theory, Chamot distinguishes three major types of strategies: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and social/affective strategies. Metacognitive strategies are higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring or evaluating the success of a learning activity. Cognitive strategies are operated directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning. Social/affective strategies represent a broad grouping that involves either interaction with another person or idea control over affect. The following are O'Malley and Chamot's typology of learning strategies.

Table 1.4 O'Malley and Chamot's Typology of Learning Strategies

Learning Strategies		Metacognitive strategies
		Cognitive strategies
		Social/affective strategies
Metacognitive	Advance Organizers	Making a general but comprehensive preview of the concept or principle in an anticipated learning activity.
	Directed Attention	Deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and to ignore irrelevant distracters.
	Selective Attention	Deciding in advance to attend to specific aspect of language input or situational details that will cue the retention of language input.
	Self-management	Understanding the conditions that help one learn and arranging for the presence of those conditions.
	Advance Preparation	Planning for and rehearsing linguistic components necessary to carry out an upcoming language task.
	Self-monitoring	Correcting one's speech for accuracy in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, or for appropriateness related to the setting or to the people who are present.
	Delayed Production	Consciously deciding to postpone speaking to learn initially through listening comprehension.
	Self-evaluation	Checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against an internal measure of completeness and accuracy.

(to be Continued)

Learning strategies		Metacognitive strategies
		Cognitive strategies
		Social/affective strategies
Cognitive	Resourcing	Defining or expanding a definition of a word or concept through use of target language reference materials.
	Directed physical response	Relating new information to physical actions, as with directives.
	Translation	Using the first language as a base for understanding or producing the second language.
	Grouping	Recording or reclassifying and perhaps labeling the material to be learned based on common attributes.
Cognitive	Note-taking	Writing down the main idea, important points, outlines, or summary of information presented orally or in writing.
	Deduction	Consciously applying rules to produce or understand the second language.
	Recombination	Constructing a meaningful sentence or larger language sequence by combining known elements in a new way.
	Imagery	Relating new information to visual concepts in memory via familiar easily retrievable visualizations, phrases, or locations.
	Auditory representation	Retention of the sound or similar sound for a word, phrase, or longer language sequence.
	Keyword	Remembering a new word in the second language by (1) identify a familiar word in the new word, and (2) generating easily recalled images of some relationship with the new word.
	Contextualization	Placing a word or phrases in a meaningful language sequence.
	Elaboration	Relating new information to other concepts in memory.
	Elaboration	Relating new information to other concepts in memory.
	Transfer	Using available information to guess meanings of new items, predict outcomes, or fill in missing information.

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