

What We Learn from the Good Language Learners: Implications for EFL Teaching

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Johnson (2001) says that around the mid-1970s, a number of studies tried to find out the characteristics of good language learners. Harmer (1998) points out that inside the classroom, some learners seem to take advantage of what is going on more than others. It looks as if they are more engaged with the process of learning than their colleagues. Teachers are aware of this, too. Teachers will frequently say that successful students possess some or all of the following characteristics

We will try to find out whether there are any generalizations which will help the students to form good habits in them and become good language learners.

Key Words : good language learners, general characteristics, specific characteristics, enhancing motivation, promoting the use of strategies, teachers' roles

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1. Introduction

According to Harmer (1998), teachers have some commonly-held views about good learners. Anecdotally, they will tell you that the students who do best are the ones who always do their homework, for example. We might be able to say, therefore, that doing homework is the trademark of a good learner. But again we are left with questions. Why do some people do homework while others don't? Why do some exceptional students succeed who don't do homework? Is it the homework itself that makes the difference or the underlying state of mind of the students?

In this paper, we will try to find out whether there are any generalizations which will help the students to form good habits in them and become good language learners.

2. The General Characteristics of Good Language Learners

2.1 Seven General Characteristics of Good Language Learners

Johnson (2001) says that around the mid-1970s, a number of studies tried to find out the characteristics of good language learners. He (2001) states that the largest so-called 'good language learner study' is Naiman et al. (1978) and another study, Pickett (1978), has much in common with parts of Naiman et al., but is much more modest in scope. A further two studies, by Stern (1975) and Rubin (1975), are well known. They are theoretical, and do not involve any direct research. We might regard them as statements of belief as to what good language learners will (or should) be like, and part of their interest is that they give a clear idea of the view of language learning predominant at that time. Rubin's study is particularly interesting for its speculations regarding what kinds of characteristics good learners have, and Naiman et al. use these speculations as the basis for part of their study. Rubin's general characteristics of good language learners, as adapted by Naiman et al. are as follows: 1) The good language learner is a willing and accurate guesser; 2) The good language learner has a strong drive to communicate, or to learn from communication. He is willing to do many

things to get his message across; 3) The good language learner is often not inhibited. He is willing to appear foolish if reasonable communication results. He is willing to make mistakes in order to learn and to communicate. He is willing to live with a certain amount of vagueness; 4) In addition to focusing on communication, the good language learner is prepared to attend to form. The good language learner is constantly looking for patterns in the language; 5) The good language learner practices; 6) The good language learner monitors his own and the speech of others. That is, he is constantly attending to how well his speech is being received and whether his performance meets the standards he has learned; 7) The good language learner attends to meaning. He knows that in order to understand the message it is not sufficient to pay attention to the language or to the surface form of speech.

2.2 Five General Characteristics of Good Language Learners

Harmer (1998) points out that inside the classroom, some learners seem to take advantage of what's going on more than others. It looks as if they are more engaged with the process of learning than their colleagues. Teachers are aware of this, too. According to him (1998), teachers will frequently say that successful students possess some or all of the following characteristics: 1) A willingness to listen: good language learners listen to what's going on—not just in the sense of paying attention, but also in terms of really listening to the English that is being used, soaking it up with eagerness and intelligence; 2) A willingness to experiment: many good language learners are not afraid to 'have a go.' They are prepared to take risks, to try things out and see how it works. Of course, not all successful language learners are extroverts, but the urge to use the language (loudly or quietly) is an important one; 3) A willingness to ask questions: although some teachers can become irritated by students who are constantly asking difficult (and sometimes irrelevant) questions, the urge to find out why is part of a successful language learner's equipment. Good teachers frequently invite students to ask if they don't understand something. Good language learners do this, judging when it is appropriate to do so and when it is not; 4) A willingness to think about how to learn: good language learners bring or invent their own study skills when they come to a lesson (and/or when they study on their own). They think about the best way to write vocabulary in their own wordbooks, for example, the best way to read a text (slowly, translating every word? or quickly, trying to get a general understanding?), the best method of drafting and re-drafting a piece of writing; 5) A willingness to accept correction: good language learners are prepared to be corrected if it helps them. They are keen to get feedback from the teacher and act upon what they are told. But this only works where teachers are

able to offer constructive criticism rather than castigating them for being wrong. Giving feedback involves praising students for things they do well, and offering them the ability to do things better where they were less successful. It involves teachers in judging their students' responses to correction so that they can act accordingly.

Referring to Rubin (1975) and Harmer (1998), it is entirely fair to say that good language learners are positive, challenging, careful, humble and high-achieving.

3. Specific Characteristics of Good Language Learners

3.1 The Role of Motivation

According to Cohen and Dörnyei (2002), motivation is often seen as the key variable of good language learners because without it, nothing much happens. Indeed, most other variables of good language learners presuppose the existence of at least some degree of motivation.

Harmer (1998) also states that one of the most successful language learning experiences we know about took place towards the end of the Second World War when the American military needed to train their personnel in the languages of the countries they would have to administer and/or deal with. In short intensive courses, the students learned fantastically fast. Likewise in Britain, Air Force personnel were taken to Cambridge and taught Russian, for example, with enormous success. Whatever we think of the teaching methods used—or the reasons for the language learning—the teachers and students in these cases had a number of things on their side: they were highly motivated, they really wanted to learn and they had powerful reasons for doing so—including, of course, a fear of failure (i.e., if they failed to master the target language, they were supposed to be sent to the firing line).

According to Harmer (1998), the desire to learn can usually come from many causes. Perhaps the students love the subject or are simply interested to see what it is like. On the other hand, they may have a practical reason for their study: they want to learn an instrument so that they can play in an orchestra, learn English so that they can watch American TV or work with English people, study Tai Chi so that they can become fitter and more relaxed, or go to cookery classes so that they can prepare better meals. Famous research carried out in the second half of the twentieth century by Gardner and Lambert (1959) suggested that students who felt most warmly about a language and who wanted to integrate into the culture of its speakers were more highly motivated (and learned more successfully) than those who were only learning language as a means to an end (e.g. getting a better job).

In other words, integrative motivation was more powerful than instrumental motivation. But whatever kind of motivation students have, it is clear that highly motivated students do better than ones without any motivation at all.

If good language learners are those that have a positive attitude towards their target language, what can teachers do if they get students who aren't like that? Will students whose motivation is only skin-deep be bad learners? Will language learners who are not extremely keen to learn automatically fail? One of the main tasks for teachers is to provoke interest and involvement in the target language learning even when students are not initially interested in it. It is by their choice of topic, activity and linguistic content that they may be able to turn a class around. It is by their attitude to class participation, their conscientiousness, their humor and their seriousness that they may influence their students. It is by their own behavior and enthusiasm that they may inspire.

Harmer (2001) suggests that at the beginning of a course, with students at whatever level and at whatever age, the teacher is faced with a range of motivations. Some students have a clear goal, by a strong extrinsic motivation to achieve it. Others still may have very weak motivation, whatever type it is. But a student's initial motivation (or lack of it), need not stay the same for ever. Rogers (1996) points out as follows: we forget that initial motivation to learn may be weak and die alternatively, but it can be increased and directed into new channels.

Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) say that motivation can be promoted consciously, which is good news for L2/FL teachers: it means that by employing certain methods, it is possible to change language learners' motivation in a positive direction. For this reason, skills in motivating learners are an important aspect of any teacher's methodological repertoire.

So far, we have seen that good language learners have powerful motivation to learn the target language and L2/FL teachers can further enhance their motivation.

3.2 Enhancing the Language Learners Motivation

On the basis of the discussion in the section 3.2, it is clear that good language learners have strong motivation for the target language. Moreover, we can be fairly certain that teachers can enhance the language learners motivation to learn the target language. In this section, we will discuss the way we strengthen the language learners motivation for the target language.

3.2.1 Two Kinds of Motivation for the Language Learning

Hedge (2000) states that any individual may be influenced by a variety of motivations which will affect such things as anxiety, or attitude, or willingness to try new learning strategies. A group of twenty Japanese students, at the beginning of intensive English language instruction at a UK university, were each asked to give four major motivations for learning English. The following list of statements represents in general the reasons given by members of the group and their rank-ordering: 1) To be able to communicate with people in an international language, both at home in Japan and while travelling in other countries - 20; 2) To be able to read a wide range of English language sources for study purposes in the UK and in Japan - 16; 3) To have a better chance of employment, status, and financial reward in the job market - 12; 4) To be able to read and listen to English language media for information and pleasure - 9; 5) To find out more about the people, places, politics etc. of English speaking cultures - 7; 6) To take up a particular career, e.g., English language teaching, work in an international company - 6; 7) To be able to participate successfully in the country I will be living in for six months -5; 8) To read English-language literature - 3; 9) Because of parental pressure - 2. She (2000) says that this list suggests two kinds of motivation for learning English: needing a language as an instrument to achieve other purposes such as doing a job effectively or studying successfully at an English-speaking institution, or wishing to integrate into the activities or culture of another group of people. Indeed, Gardner and Lambert (1972) termed these two as integrative and instrumental motivation. These two kinds of motivation can be demonstrated by the statements they gave students of French in Canada against which to indicate their own reasons for learning. Of the following statements, the first two are taken as indicative of integrative motivation and the second two of instrumental motivation: 1) It will enable me to gain good friends more easily among French-speaking people; 2) It should enable me to begin to think and behave as the French do; 3) One needs a good knowledge of at least one foreign language to merit social recognition; 4) I need it in order to finish high school. This integrative-instrumental distinction may be most relevant to bilingual societies such as Canada where one language spoken in the community is a minority language, or to short-stay situations in the target language community.

The point is that two kinds of motivation (i.e., integrative and instrumental motivation) are closely related to L2/FL learning.

3.2.2 The Nature of Motivation for L2/FL Learning

According to Cohen and Dörnyei (2002), motivation to learn a second/foreign language is

very different from the motivation to learn any other school subject. This is because an L2/FL is not only a communication code, but also a representative of the L2 culture where it is spoken. Learning a second/foreign language therefore always entails learning a second/foreign culture to some degree. Williams (1994) also argues as follows: The learning of a foreign language involves far more than simply learning skills, or a system of rules, or a grammar; it involves an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviors and ways of being, and therefore has a significant impact on the social nature of the learner. As a consequence, L2/FL learning motivation will always have a strong sociocultural component. Learners may well be reluctant to set about learning the language of a cultural group towards which they have truly negative feelings, and similarly, having favorable attitudes towards a language community may well increase the motivation to learn their language. In fact, recognition of this reality inspired the initiation of L2/FL learning motivation research at the end of the 1950s in Canada by Gardner and Lambert. The social psychological approach they adopted is still one of the most influential directions in the study of L2/FL learning motivation.

To sum up, the motivation for learning L2/FL is concerned with two kinds of motivation (i.e., integrative and instrumental) as we have discussed in the section 3.2.1.

3.2.3 Other Aspects of Motivation for L2/FL Learning

The second important aspect of L2/FL learning motivation is that it is not stable and static but is rather in a continuous process of change. Dörnyei (2001a) argues that motivation undergoes a cycle that has at least three distinct phases. First, motivation needs to be generated. The motivational dimension related to this initial phase can be referred to as "choice motivation" because the motivation that is generated then leads to the selection of the goal or task to be pursued. Second, the generated motivation needs to be actively maintained and protected while the particular action lasts. This motivational dimension has been referred to as "executive motivation" (or volition), and it is particularly relevant to learning in classroom settings, where students are exposed to a great number of distracting influences, such as off-task thoughts, irrelevant distractions from others, anxiety about the tasks or physical conditions that make it difficult to complete the task. Finally, there is a third phase following the completion of the action—termed "motivational retrospection"—which concerns learners' retrospective evaluation or how things went. The way students process their past experiences in this retrospective phase will determine the kind of activities they will be motivated to pursue in the future. According to Dörnyei (2001), these three phases are

associated with largely different motives. That is, people will be influenced by different factors while they are still contemplating an action from those that influence them once they have embarked on some action. And similarly, when we look back at something and evaluate it, again a new set of motivational components may well become relevant.

In addition to two kinds of general motivation which we have discussed in the sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, we can say with fair certainty that a variety of motivation has influence on language learning.

3.2.4 Motivating Language Learners

Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) propose the way motivation research help classroom practitioners. According to them (2002), the most obvious way is by providing a list of practical motivational techniques that teachers can apply. For such lists to be comprehensive and valid, they need to be based on a solid underlying theoretical framework. Motivational recommendations have been offered by a number of scholars in the L2/FL field (Alison, 1993; Brown, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Williams & Burden, 1997; Dörnyei & Csizéér, 1998), with Dörnyei (2001b) providing a comprehensive summary of the topic. Dörnyei (2003) uses the model described above (choice motivation/ executive motivation/ motivational retrospection) as an organizing framework and identifies four principal aspects of motivational teaching practice: 1) Creating the basic motivational conditions' (i.e., establishing rapport with the students; fostering a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere; developing a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms); 2) Generating initial student motivation (i.e., enhancing the learners' L2/FL-related values and attitudes; increasing the learners' expectancy of success; increasing the learners' goal-orientedness; making teaching materials relevant to the learners; creating realistic learner beliefs); 3) Maintaining and protecting motivation (i.e., making learning stimulating; setting specific learner goals; presenting tasks in a motivating way; protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence; allowing learners to maintain a positive social image; creating learner autonomy; promoting co-operation among the learners; promoting self-motivating strategies); 4) Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation (i.e., providing motivational feedback; promoting motivational attributions; increasing learner satisfaction; offering rewards and grades in a motivating manner).

Moreover, Harmer (2001) also suggests the effective way teachers enhance students' motivation. He (2001) proposes that there are three areas where our behavior can directly influence our students' continuing participation: 1) Goals and goal setting: we can say that

motivation is closely bound up with a person's desire to achieve a goal. A distinction needs to be made here between long- and short-term goals. Long-term goals may include the mastery of English, the passing of an examination (at the end of the year), the possibility of a better job in the future, etc. Short-term goals, on the other hand, might be the learning of a small amount of new language, the successful writing of an essay, the ability to partake in a discussion or the passing of the progress test at the end of the week. Teachers need to recognize that long-term goals are vitally important but that they can often seem too far away. When English seems to be more difficult than the student had anticipated, the long-term goals can begin to behave like mirages in the desert, appearing and disappearing at random. Short-term goals, on the other hand, are by their nature much closer to the student's day-to-day reality. It is much easier to focus on the end of the week than the end of the year. If the teacher can help students in the achievement of short-term goals, this will have a significant effect on their motivation. After all, nothing succeeds like success; 2) Learning environment: Although teachers may not be able to choose their actual classrooms, they can still do a lot about physical appearance of the classroom and the emotional atmosphere of their lessons. Both of these can have a powerful effect on the initial and continuing motivation of students. When students walk into an attractive classroom at the beginning of a language learning course, it may help to get their motivation for the process going. When they come to an unattractive place, motivation may not be initiated in this way. Teachers can decorate even the most unattractive classrooms with all kinds of visual material to make them more agreeable as learning environments. Even where this is not possible because the classroom is not theirs, teachers can still change the atmosphere through such things as the use of music; even the immovability of the furniture (if this is a problem) can be ameliorated by having students get up and walk around the room when this is appropriate. All of this is less important, however, than the emotional atmosphere that teachers are able to create and sustain. That is why they have to be careful about how they respond to students, especially in the giving of feedback and correction. There is a need for a supportive, cooperative environment to suit the various language learner types. Above all, the teacher's rapport with the students is critical to creating the right conditions for motivated learning; 3) Interesting classes: if students are to continue to be intrinsically motivated, they clearly need to be interested both in the target language they are studying and in the activities and topics they are presented with. We need to provide them with a variety of communicative activities and exercises to keep them engaged. The choice of material to take into class will be crucial too, but even more important than this will be the ways in which it is used in the lesson. Teachers'

attempts to initiate and sustain their students' motivation are absolutely critical to their learning success in the target language.

The point is that teachers should continue to enhance language learner's motivation for the target language with a variety of techniques and skills.

3.3 Language Learning Strategies

3.3.1 The Definition of Language Learning Strategies

Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) state that when learning and using an L2/FL, learners may employ a number of strategies which are usually aimed at improving their performance. Second/Foreign-language researchers first noticed the importance of various learning strategies when they were examining the good language learner in the 1970s. The results indicated that it was not merely a high degree of language aptitude and motivation that caused some learners to excel but also the students' own active and creative participation in the learning process through the application of individualized learning techniques. Research has found that the good language learner is in command of a rich and sufficiently personalized repertoire of such strategies.

Ortega (2009) states that Rubin (1975) summarized the first-generation findings in six key attributes of good learners, all related to strategic behaviour: 1) they are good guessers; 2) they pay analytical attention to form but also attend to meaning; 3) they try out their new knowledge; 4) they monitor their production and that of others; 5) they constantly practice; 6) they cope well with feelings of vulnerability for the sake of putting themselves in situations where they communicate and learn. Building on the success of these initial efforts, many SLA researchers continued to invest great energy into studying L2/FL learning strategies in the 1980s. Chaudron (2006) says that these efforts gave way to two separate but essentially compatible traditions in the United States: the observation-based research programme conducted by Anna Chamot and colleagues, and the questionnaire-based research on learning strategies developed by Rebecca Oxford and colleagues. A series of descriptive studies conducted by O'Malley, Chamot and colleagues in the mid-1980s were the first ones to attempt to document the use of learning strategies observationally and behaviorally and in connection with specific language task types. The research methodology rested on the use of structured interviews in which small groups of three to five students were asked to recall or imagine strategies they would use in the context of hypothetical L2 tasks and situations. In some of the studies, think-aloud verbal accounts while performing actual L2 tasks were also used. The studies encompassed ESL as well as foreign language learning and they included students of

beginning as well as intermediate levels of proficiency enrolled in both high-school and college settings. The most important of the studies was a three-year project involving three successive phases and summarized in O'Malley and Chamot (1990). The cross-sectional phase confirmed previous strategy findings but also revealed some differences between the high-school foreign language Spanish and the college foreign language Russian samples, apparently related to the tasks that were typical of the respective curricula in each setting. The longitudinal phase focused on documenting the development of strategy use over a school year by 13 high-school students of Spanish and six college students of Russian. The findings confirmed and expanded those of previous studies and led to the generation of an exhaustive list of learning strategies, classified into the three categories of cognitive, metacognitive and social-affective strategies. However, no clear patterns were found in terms of longitudinal change per se. During the third, strategy training phase, three Russian instructors and one Spanish teacher were observed teaching strategies on nine occasions over two semesters. The training results were largely disappointing. Overall, the research program contributed by Chamot and her colleagues offers the following sobering insight: the types of strategy used by L2/FL learners can be determined to a great extent by course objectives and course syllabus, by students' motivation for learning the language and by the task itself. Oxford's (1990) prolific strategy work is based on a long inventory and an accompanying instrument, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The SILL elicits levels of reported strategy frequency via five-point Likert scales. Six types of strategy are posited in the model: affective (e.g., encouraging oneself when afraid to speak), social (e.g., practicing the L2/FL with other people), metacognitive (e.g., having clear goals for improving one's own skills; noticing one's own mistakes), cognitive (e.g., guessing from context; writing notes), memory-related (e.g., connecting word sounds with a mental image or picture) and compensatory (e.g., using circumlocutions). This classification is essentially compatible with the three types proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), a conclusion supported by the findings reported by Hsiao and Oxford (2002) in their factor analysis of SILL responses from 517 Taiwanese college-level EFL students. Oxford's survey approach to L2/FL learning strategies has been frequently used. This popularity may be in part explained by the convenience of a questionnaire with good psychometric properties that makes it easy for other researchers to adopt the framework. Ortega (2009) goes on to say that, for example, Peacock and Ho (2003) used the SILL in a large-scale study in Hong Kong. By surveying 1,006 university students and further interviewing 48 of them, they were able to uncover some differences in the L2 learning strategy use related to academic discipline, age and gender.

Moreover, although learner strategies have been categorized in numerous ways as we have discussed, one helpful distinction is between language learning and language use strategies. According to Cohen and Dörnyei (2002), language learning strategies are categorized as referring to the conscious and semiconscious thoughts and behaviors used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and understanding of a target language. On the other hand, language use strategies are categorized as referring to strategies for using the language that has been learned, however incompletely, including four sub-sets of strategies: 1) Retrieval strategies (strategies used to call up language material from storage, for example, calling up the correct verb in its appropriate tense or retrieving the meaning of a word when it is heard or read; 2) Rehearsal strategies (strategies for practicing target language structures, for example, rehearsing the subjunctive form for several Spanish verbs in preparation for using them communicatively in a request in Spanish to a teacher or boss to be excused for the day; 3) Communication strategies (strategies used to convey a message that is both meaningful and informative for the listener or reader, for example, when we want to explain technical information for which we do not have the specialized vocabulary); 4) Cover strategies (strategies for creating an appearance of language ability so as not to look unprepared, foolish or even stupid, for example, using a memorized and partially understood phrase in a classroom drill in order to keep the action going, or laughing at a joke that you did not understand at all). Along with the two general strategy types described above, language learning and language use strategies, we would like to add a third one, self-motivating strategies, which learners can use to increase or protect their existing motivation. This is a rather new area in educational psychology, but research during the past decade has shown that learners' self-motivating capacity is a major factor contributing to success in language learning.

3.3.2 The Strategy Use of Successful and Less Successful language Learners

3.3.2.1 The Strategy Use of Successful Language Learners

Oxford (2002) points out that research indicates that appropriate use of language learning strategies, which include dozens or even hundreds of possible behaviors (such as seeking out conversation partners, grouping words to be memorized, or giving oneself encouragement), results in improved L2/FL proficiency overall, or in specific language skill areas. She (2002) also states that research suggests that effective L2/FL learners are aware of the strategies they use and why they employ them, as found in think-aloud procedures (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Skilled L2/FL learners select strategies that work well together

and that are tailored to the requirements of the language task. For high-performing L2/FL learners, cognitive and metacognitive strategies often go together. Learners far less often cite social and affective strategies, perhaps because L2/FL researchers fail to ask about them in detail and perhaps because even skilled learners mistakenly hesitate to consider these as real strategies.

Griffiths (2008) points out that, on the basis of the results of his research, higher level students do, indeed, report significantly more frequent use of language learning strategies than do lower level students. Furthermore, the higher level students report using many more (three times as many, in fact) language learning strategies highly frequently than students working at lower levels. In other words, the higher level students report using a much larger repertoire of strategies significantly more frequently than the lower level students. It is, of course, necessary to be cautious about labeling the higher level students as good language learners and those at a lower level, by implication, bad language learners. There are many reasons why students might be in a lower level class, including length of time studying English or the influence of the mother tongue.

Thus we can say that good language learners are aware of strategies they use and why they employ them. In addition they make use of a variety of language learning strategies effectively and appropriately.

3.3.2.2 The Strategy Use of Less Successful language Learners

Oxford (2002) points out that research suggests that less skilled L2/FL learners sometimes are not even aware of the noncommunicative or rather mundane strategies they use, such as translation, rote memorization, and repetition. However, more recent research indicates that many of the less effective L2/FL learners are indeed aware of the strategies they use, can describe them clearly, and actually use just as many strategies as effective L2/FL learners. However, Vann and Abraham (1989) states that less effective learners apply these strategies in a random, even desperate manner, without careful orchestration and without targeting the strategies to the task. Galloway and Labarca (1991) say that they do not construct a well-ordered L2/FL system, but instead retain an untidy assemblage of unrelated fragments.

That is, it is probable that less successful learners cannot make use of language learning strategies effectively and appropriately.

3.3.3 The Instruction of Language Learning Strategies

Oxford (2001) states that learning strategies are teachable, and positive effects of strategy instruction emerged for proficiency in listening (Johnson, 1999), speaking (Varela, 1999), reading (Park-Oh, 1994) and writing (Sano, 1999). In various language learning investigations, strategy instruction led to greater strategy use and self-efficacy (Chamot et al., 1996), anxiety reduction (Johnson, 1999), and to increased motivation, strategy knowledge and positive attitudes (Nunan, 1997).

In addition, according to Cohen and Dörnyei (2002), research (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995; Weaver & Cohen, 1997; Cohen, 1998) has found that it is possible to teach learners to enhance their strategy use, that is, to help them to be more conscious and systematic about the strategies that they already use and to add new strategies to their repertoire. Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) also describe that the following are steps that teachers can take to make their instruction strategies-based, along with motivating learners to engage themselves in this type of awareness-raising: 1) Raise learner awareness about language learner strategies at the outset in order to generate motivation to be more conscious about style preferences and more proactive about the use of language strategies; 2) Find out which strategies the students may already use or may wish to add to their repertoire; 3) Suggest modelling new effective strategies; 4) Provide a rationale for strategy use, since learners are likely to apply strategies or develop new ones only if they become convinced about their usefulness; 5) Provide guided exercises or experiences to help students put the strategies into practice; 6) Encourage students to enhance their current strategy repertoire; 7) Encourage students to be willing to use such strategies even when it may mean taking risks; 8) Highlight cross-cultural differences in how strategies (especially communicative strategies) might be employed (for example, when it is appropriate to use filled pauses in a language, such as the use of *eto* and *ano* in Japanese or *este* in Spanish, since their usage is somewhat different from that of *uh* in English); 9) Organize sharing sessions: from time to time ask students to share information about the strategies they have generated or found particularly useful. Because of their direct involvement in the learning process, students often have fresh insights they can share with their peers. In addition, personalized learning strategies are sometimes amusing to hear about and students may enjoy sharing them, especially when they see that their peers are doing some of the same things.

Oxford (2002) proposes that ESL/EFL teachers can help their students recognize the power of consciously using language learning strategies to make learning quicker, easier, more effective, and more fun. To help all students become more aware of their strategy choices, ESL/EFL teachers can assist students in identifying their own current learning

strategies by means of diaries, surveys, or interviews. ESL/EFL teachers can then weave learning strategy training into regular classroom events in a natural but highly explicit way, providing ample opportunity for practicing strategies and transferring them to new tasks. Strategy instruction can include information about learning styles on which the students partially base their choice of learning strategies and can highlight cultural differences in learning strategies and styles that exist in any ESL/EFL classroom. ESL/EFL teachers should tailor strategy training to the real, communicative needs of learners in the particular situation.

4. Conclusion

As Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) point out, the individual difference variables of motivation and strategies are interrelated in numerous ways. If students find certain learning strategies that particularly suit them (for example, an auditory learner taking the initiative to tape-record portions of a class session and then playing them back in order to review vocabulary and fix the words more solidly in memory), such actions may also enhance their interest in the task and expectancy of success, which will in turn increase their motivation with this task and ideally with others. Similarly, effective and well-personalized communication strategies (such as when the extroverted learner keeps a conversation going with a well-placed paraphrase when the target-language word for *insight* escapes him/her) can increase the learners' linguistic self-confidence and generate increased satisfaction in their L2/FL use. Finally, a teacher who keeps learner self-motivating strategies firmly in mind can check periodically to make sure that they are in the learners' repertoire and that they are doing everything to assist language learners in keeping their motivational level high. Given the numerous other pedagogical issues to consider in the classroom, teachers may not feel that there is time to engage in this kind of top-down motivation and strategy planning for a given course. In reality, it may be just such planning which makes the teaching of a language course more productive for both the teacher and the students (i.e., language learners), as well as more enjoyable.

Harmer (1998) also states that if what we have discussed are good language learner qualities, then it is part of a teacher's job to encourage them by creating an atmosphere which shows students that their experimentation and questions are welcome (within reason). Teachers can spend some time discussing how to learn with them, guiding them towards their own best methods of study.

To sum up, teachers should become a good adviser to promote the characteristics of language learners vigorously. At the same time, teachers should help the less proficient language learners acquire the characteristics of good language learners.

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