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OELP Video, Module 07, Learning Strategies
Manual, Draft: 2005-12-12. LOB
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Length of this video module: Approximately 13 minutes.

Notes to Trainer

As you work through this module, use pairs or groups whenever you think it might be effective. After each group activity, debrief the answers, and use them for further discussion of various points. Refer back to the main points when appropriate. It is important that teachers apply the concepts in the module to their own classrooms and situations. One goal for this module is to build participant awareness of the existence and use of learning strategies in individual learners. A second goal is for participants to begin thinking about teaching strategies they can use in their classes that will help their learners develop their own set of learning strategies to facilitate learning.

See Appendix A for handouts on General Guided Observation Tasks that can be used with any of the modules.

Before Viewing

Remind the participants that every one of them has learned a second language at some time in their lives. Have them think back to that time and try to make a list of the kind of things they did that helped them learn the language. They should then discuss their lists with others in their groups to get more ideas that might also apply to themselves.

Once they have their lists, have them go to the Introduction, expanded narrative portion of the manual and try to identify their own learning techniques, or strategies, and list them under appropriate columns.

This module uses a different format than most of the other modules. It focuses on one teacher and one class in order to get a more in depth understanding of how to use strategies in a classroom. Because learning strategies are often internal, make it clear to the participants that the focus of this module will be on teaching strategies that can facilitate students' learning and help them develop their own set of learning strategies. They will see that teaching strategies can also be thought of as learning strategies.

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Preview Vocabulary

Terms	Definitions
Affective	Related to learner feelings, attitude, values, and motivation.
Autonomy/ autonomous	The ability to make your own decisions; to direct your own learning.
Cognition/ cognitive	Mental processes, especially those used in learning, such as thinking, remembering, classifying, recognizing, synthesizing, etc.
Crocodile	A reptile with a long body set low to the ground, a long heavy tail, a large, long mouth, and sharp teeth. It lives near rivers and swamps in warm, wet areas.
Crocodile tears	Fake or phony tears that a person uses to pretend to be sad or sorry.
Evolve/ evolving	To change or changing gradually; gradual development.
Facilitate	To make it easier for something to happen; for students to learn.
Gap in learning	Learning that did not happen, which creates a problem for natural development towards mastery. In this module there is a gap in student learning as a result of interrupted schooling.
Infer/ inference	Understanding an idea or a piece of information by using other information.
Metacognition / metacognitive	Global understanding of thinking or mental processes that enable learners to recognize, monitor, and organize those processes. May be called "global strategies."
Overlap	When two things, processes, ideas, etc. overlap, it means that each contains some aspects or parts of the other, or that part of one covers part of the other.
Pidgin	An incomplete, perhaps slightly changed form of a language often spoken by people who need to use the language for specific purposes but have no need for mastery.
Predict/ predictive	To know what is going to happen before it happens; something that is systematic enough that one can anticipate

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Schema activation what will happen
Accessing underlying knowledge that learners already have
about a topic, context, structure, etc.

Now start the video. Listen to the introduction. Complete the guided observation and reflection tasks for each of the video segments. The next part of the manual is for trainees and is available on separate pages for ease of copying.

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Introduction, Expanded Narrative

The strategies listed below are only some examples of possible strategies. Some of them also overlap categories. You may put some of them under different categories. A strategy might be a teaching strategy under one category and a learning strategy under another.

TS = teaching strategies.

Learning/ Academic Support Strategies	Communicative Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diagnosing learner needs and strengths (TS).• Using a wide range of activities (TS).• Drawing topics and activities from many sources (TS).• Creating activities that transfer language skills from the English class to content classes (TS).• Forming student groups for support and use of shared knowledge (TS).• Using graphics to facilitate understanding (TS).• Use graphic organizers to help learners find and organize information (TS).• Provide cues, support to enable learners to improve comprehension and production (TS).• Using dictionaries and other resource materials.• Summarizing material covered.• Note-taking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trying new language.• Using natural feedback to correct errors.• Clarifying meaning while speaking• Using social strategies, e.g. “What do <i>you</i> think?” (Also an affective strategy.)• Using gestures when recall is a problem or when needed language is unknown.• Using appropriate “filler” sounds to provide thinking time, e.g. uh-h-h, so-o-o...

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Metacognitive/ Global Strategies	Cognitive/ Problem-solving Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding own learning needs and strengths.• Planning learning.• Organizing the input, the information.• Using graphic organizers.• Figuring out what is needed to enhance comprehension; to remember.• Using multimedia, graphics for specific to support comprehension and learning.• Using context cues.• Checking to see if guesses are right.• Summarizing material covered.• Monitoring comprehension.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transferring learned language skills to content class work.• Using the known to understand the unknown; using schema, own experience to understand new context.• Relating ideas.• Classifying or grouping words or concepts.• Unconscious behaviors to facilitate comprehension, e.g. slowing reading speed while reading.• Trying to picture or visualize material.• Memorizing.• Creating “rules” based on patterns.• Making inferences, predictions from context.

Affective strategies are not listed above, but they are also important. These are such things as student motivation, learner confidence, and a trusting atmosphere that encourages risk-taking and participation.

Module Focus

The focus of this module is the types of strategies listed in the table above:

- Language learning and communication strategies
- Metacognitive and cognitive strategies

Students can become better learners if they are able to use learning strategies. Good language learners develop their own set of these strategies. Some strategies that can be used are learning, or academic, strategies, metacognitive and cognitive strategies, and social and affective strategies. The teacher’s role is to consciously build strategy training into the lessons, to help students develop their own strategies.

- First, they need to learn about their students’ backgrounds, identify student problems, and find out what strategies learners are currently using. They can do this by informally talking with the students, interviewing them, or having formal consultations.
- Next, they need to help students figure out which strategies work best for them – or can work best for them.
- And finally, they need to assist students in developing a set of strategies that work well together, that reinforce each other. A list of unrelated strategies is not as helpful as a related set.

Viewing Points

You will hear and see a list a characteristics and strategies that are shared by successful language learners. After listening, try to list as many of them as you can recall. Walk around the room, comparing your lists with others, adding to your list. There were eight characteristics listed. Keep these lists to use in the Summary section below.

Video Segment #1, Watch, Analyze, Infer: Observation Guide [Read before viewing.]

What to look for:

- Kinds of strategies
- Language-specific skills
- Affective factors

Because this is an extended segment, with an in-depth look at a single case, try to take notes and make lists during your viewing. Stop and replay the tape as needed.

1. Review the strategy tables in the Introduction. As you watch the video, check the strategies you see, or that the teacher talks about.
2. View the video again. List the language-specific skills that students use in the class and the activities that students are doing. Note which skills are used during each activity and how they are integrated.
3. View the tape a third time and try to list affective factors, both those that the teacher planned or used and those that seem part of the class dynamic.

Reflection

[Read and answer after viewing.]

1. Compare your checked lists in your group or with a partner. If you have some choices that are different, explain why you checked them. How would you categorize most of the strategies that you see? Are they teaching or learning strategies? Which specific strategies do you think the students in this class are utilizing as they do the activities? One thing the teacher talked about was the challenges her students had. What were some of these challenges? What kinds of challenges do your own students face?
2. Compare lists of language-specific skills and activities. How are the skills integrated in the activities? What strategies does the teacher use to help students focus on important points and understand content. Do you use any of these? Which ones, and how do you use them?
3. What affective factors were present in the organization of the classroom space? In the lesson format and way the teacher had students do the work? Do you think they were effective? All of them? Some of them? Explain your answer to others in your group.

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Summary Discussion

1. Take out your lists of successful learner characteristics and strategies from the Viewing Points activity. Again refer back to the lists you wrote about your own learning. Which of the items are the same? Which different? Do you think these items provide a good description of a successful language learner? Would you add anything? Subtract anything? If so, what?
2. Referring back to the various lists you created during this module, consider the following:
 - Are you aware of the kinds of strategies your own students use? What are the ones you see used most frequently? Are some of your students “successful language learners?” What characteristics and strategies do they share with the list in #1?
 - Are there any of the listed strategies that you consider to be more important in a classroom than others? Explain your answers to a partner or others in the group.
3. After viewing this module, do you think you will try to use some of these strategies in your class? Why or why not? If yes, which ones will you try? Which ones do you think might be most successful with your particular students? How will you go about diagnosing students and introducing strategies in the classroom?

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Now You Try It—An Action Plan

Step 1

Think about your own classes and your answer to the summary questions above. How could you use some of the strategies and techniques listed to:

- Create a trusting classroom atmosphere that encourages risk-taking and participation.
- Build student confidence in their ability to use the language
- Improve learners' cognitive processing
- Activate schema
- Help students transfer their skills to appropriate language use in your situation, perhaps for content classes that are taught in English, for internet accessibility, for understanding music and movies, or just for talking with foreigners.

Talk about your ideas with others in your group.

Step 2

By yourself or with a peer, design a 15-minute segment of a lesson that includes the use of some of the strategies you listed.

Step 3

Share your plan with others in your group. Explain what activity would come before and after your segment. Get peer ideas and feedback.

Step 4

Rewrite your design. Try it with your class. If you are not teaching, give it to the trainer for feedback.

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Readings And Resources

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Appendix A07: Module 07 Answer Key to Reflection Questions

Following are some suggested answers to the reflection questions in this module, along with points to consider about learning strategies. You may have different answers and some additional points to make, as observers may see different things in the video segments and have their own teaching and learning experiences. The responses below are listed in the same order as the segments in each module.

Segment #1, Watch, Analyze, Infer

1. Teaching strategies used or discussed by the teacher (this list should be fleshed out to the extent that you feel to be appropriate):
 - Diagnosing learner needs and strengths.
 - Using a wide range of activities.
 - Drawing topics and activities from many sources.
 - Creating activities that transfer language skills from the English class to other classes (e.g. Biology).
 - Activating student's background knowledge about the content they already know so that they can transfer it to new domains (e.g. crocodiles, lizards, folktales).
 - Strategically forming student pairs and groups for support and use of shared knowledge. Students were placed in groups and each given a different topic to work on so that they had to communicate the results of their group work to the rest of the class .
 - Using graphics and multimedia (photos, video, images and student work on the walls) to facilitate understanding .
 - Using graphic organizers to help learners find and organize information.
 - Providing cues, support to enable learners to improve comprehension and production.
 - Having learners take notes. In some cases, students referred to their notes as they spoke.
 - Giving students time to self-correct, to spontaneously contribute information, and to ask questions.
2. This teacher makes effective use of a wide range of activities. She draws on topics and activities from many sources. She has diagnosed her students strengths and challenges and she builds them into her teaching plans. She also helps students figure out which strategies work best for them and develop a related set of activities.
3. Affective factors. Things of interest that we can see in this class include respect for student ideas, and a positive reaction to humor., Students felt comfortable talking and adding to their group's report and even other groups' reports as they

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felt moved to do so. They connected their own personal experiences with the class content.