

Ten Instructional Guidelines for Strategic Success in Learning English:

Helping Your Students



Presented at UNAM

by

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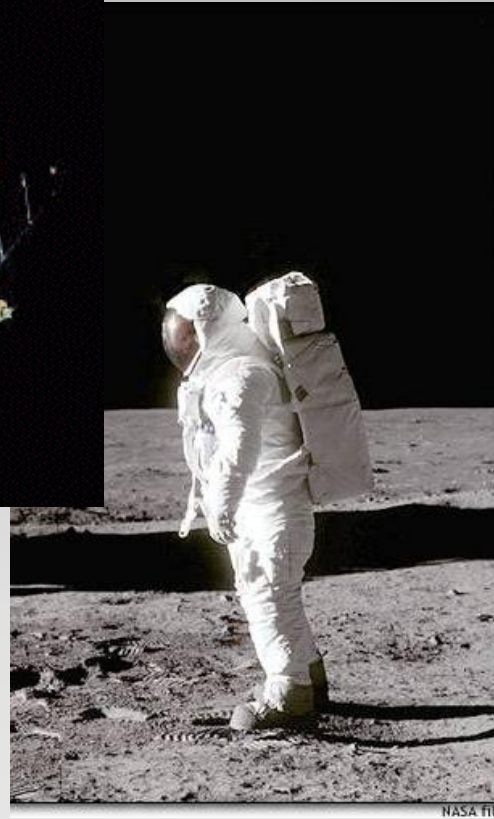
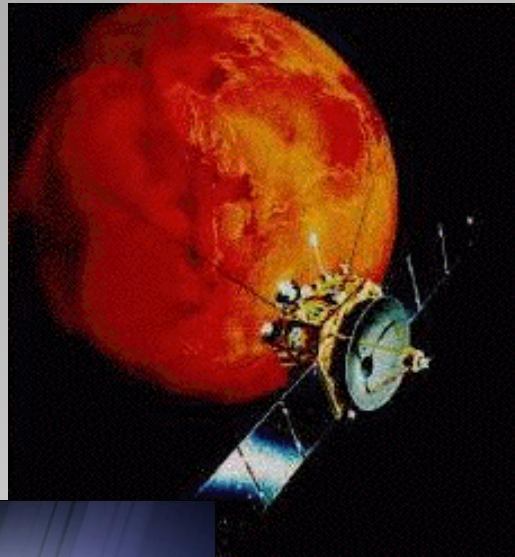
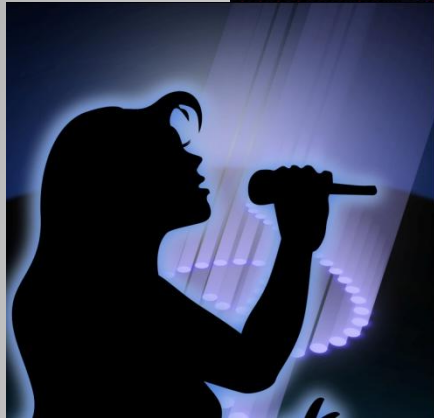
Guideline 1. Teachers should understand the difference between **teaching strategies and **learning strategies**.**

- **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)** - An instructional approach to teach students how to communicate (reading, writing, listening, speaking); focuses on fluency and accuracy
- **Task-Oriented Language Teaching** - A form of CLT that focuses on accomplishing specific language tasks

These are not learning strategies!

Guideline 2. Teachers should use pictures to help teach the purposes of learning strategies.





Guideline 2 (Continued)

Guideline 3. Teachers should define learning strategies very simply in words.

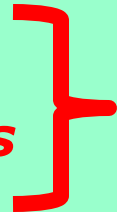
Learning strategies are what students do for themselves (sometimes with teachers' help)

Learning strategies are:

1. *broad, goal-directed actions*
2. *consciously employed by the learner*
3. *for the purposes of . . .*

a. meeting goals

b. overcoming barriers



Learning strategies have double value!

Guideline 4. Teachers should:
a. find out their students' goals and
b. explain that learning strategies help
students meet their goals.

Examples of some students' goals:

- Become a better global citizen by knowing the language
- Connect with the rest of the world
- Improve listening and speaking skills
- Understand the culture
- Become more comfortable speaking outside of class
- Be better at my job
- Talk to my mother in her native language
- Make friends and get a better feel for the culture
- Get better at comprehending newspapers
- Learn many new grammar patterns
- Get my "ear" back for listening to the language
- Communicate for world peace

For example, strategies help people reach proficiency goals

- With the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, Oxford, 1990), correlations with **language proficiency** are **.30 to .73**
- **21% - 56%** of proficiency variance is explained by strategy use reported on the SILL
- Language learners continue to use strategies through the **highly advanced** or **distinguished level**

Guideline 5. Teachers should:
a. find out the barriers of their students
b. explain that learning strategies help
students overcome their barriers!

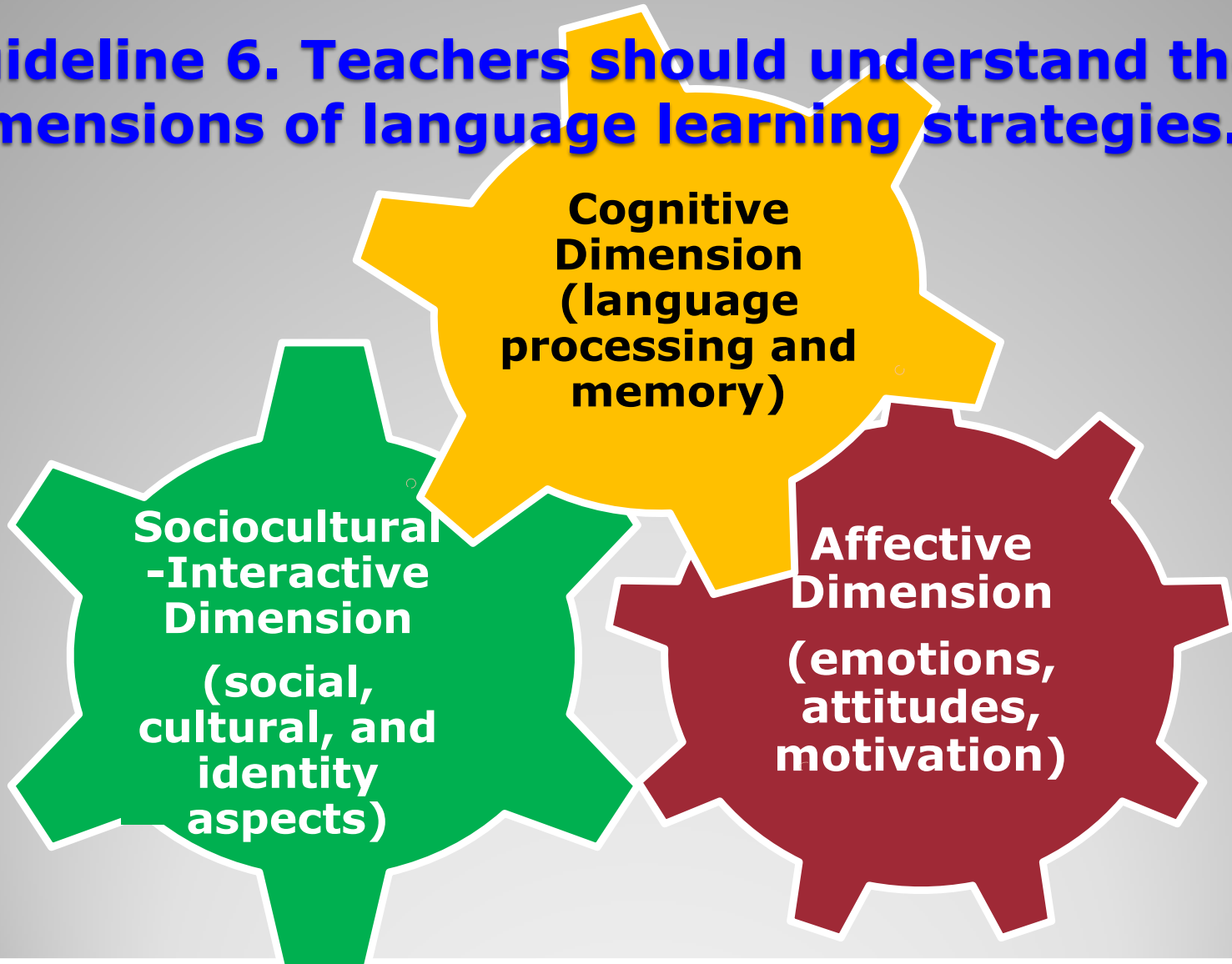
Examples of barriers:

- I don't know how to learn a language!
- I don't think I have any learning strategies
- I always forget what I learned – how can I retain it?
- It's hard to think like a native speaker
- Translating directly doesn't work because there are cultural differences
- Sometimes I don't understand the vocabulary
- I hang around with native speakers of my language, not of the target language
- I am shy
- I get nervous when I have to speak
- I don't know where to find language learning resources
- I don't have time to learn a language.

For example, strategies help students overcome barriers like low motivation, fear of failing, anxiety about speaking, and perceived lack of time

- The more learning strategies, the greater the motivation (and vice versa)
- Learning strategy instruction increases *self-efficacy* (belief that one can achieve a goal or task)
- Strategies help learners ***reduce their fear and anxiety*** about communication
- Certain metacognitive strategies help students ***organize their time*** for language learning

Guideline 6. Teachers should understand the dimensions of language learning strategies.



Learning strategies

- **6 strategies in the cognitive dimension (cognitive strategies):**
 - Using the Senses to Understand and Remember
 - Activating Knowledge
 - Reasoning
 - Conceptualizing with Details (e.g., analyzing, scanning for details)
 - Conceptualizing Broadly (e.g., skimming, synthesizing, summarizing)
 - Going Beyond the Existing Data

Learning strategies

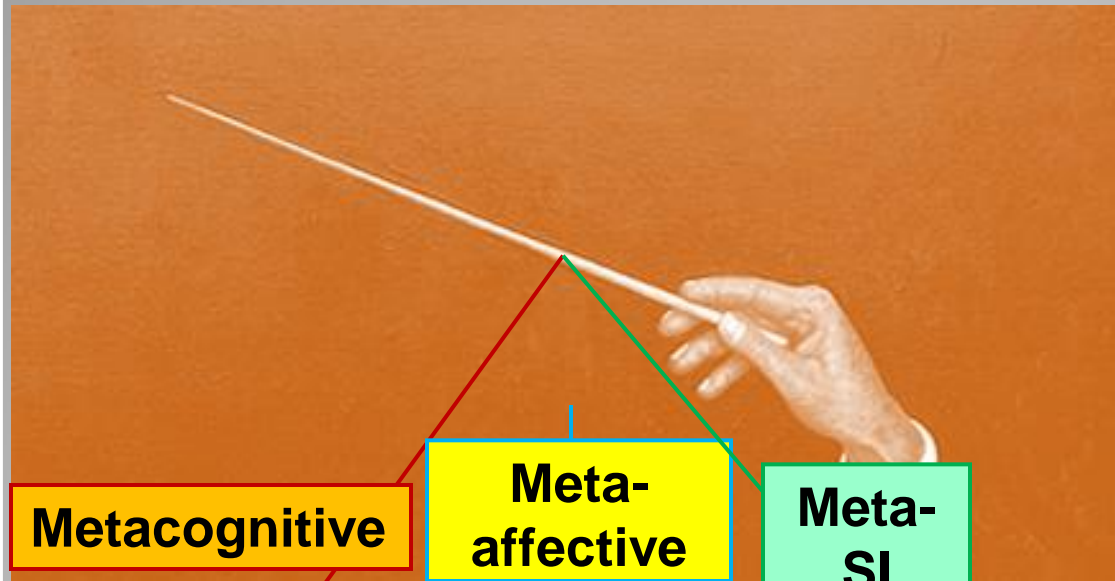
- **2 strategies in the affective dimension (affective strategies):**
 - Activating Supportive Emotions, Beliefs, and Attitudes
 - Generating and Maintaining Motivation

Learning strategies

- **3 strategies in the sociocultural-interactive dimension (SI strategies):**
 - Interacting to Learn and Communicate
 - Learning Despite Communicative Knowledge Gaps
 - Dealing with Sociocultural Contexts and Identities

Guideline 7. Teachers should know the 8 master strategies (“metastrategies”) that guide all other strategies

- Paying Attention
- Planning
- Obtaining and Using Resources
- Organizing
- Implementing Plans
- Orchestrating Strategy Use
- Monitoring
- Evaluating



Metacognitive

Cognitive
Strategies



**Meta-
affective**

Affective
strategies



**Meta-
SI**

SI
strategies



**How master
strategies
(meta-
strategies)
influence
strategy
use in
3 dimensions**

Guideline 8. Teachers should use straightforward strategy names.

- When talking about strategies with students, give every strategy a name.
- Keep the names **simple**.
- Avoid using technical names.

Guideline 9. Teachers should assess students' strategy use.

- Class discussions
- Learner diaries or journals
- Dialogue journals
- Learning logs
- Observations
- Color-coding of strategies
- Strategy questionnaires
- Strategy bulletin boards
- "Think-aloud" or "think-after"
- Personal or group interviews

Various Surveys Are Available

- *Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, Oxford, 1989)*
 - 80-item version and 50-item version, .92-.98 reliability (out of 1.00)
- Confirmatory factor analysis (N=517 college learners): 50-item SILL showed most consistent fit with learners' strategy use (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002).

- *Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, Oxford, 1990)* – continued
 - As mentioned earlier, correlations between *SILL* and proficiency:
 - **$r=.73$** (Dreyer and Oxford, 1996)
 - **.30 to .50** in studies in five other countries (Oxford, 1999).
 - Statistically significant relationships with other strategy instruments (e.g., the *LASSI*), with an L2 aptitude test (the *Modern Language Aptitude Test*), and measures of learning style and motivation

Strategy assessments in multiple language skill areas

- ***Learning Strategies Survey (LSS , Cohen, Oxford and Chi, 2003)***
 - 89 items
 - 5-point Likert scale
 - Covers L2 learning strategies organized according to these areas: listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary learning, and translation
 - 5 factors: Learning Structure and Vocabulary, Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Asking for Clarification (reliabilities .67 to .85)
 - Confirmatory factor analysis showed fair fit with the data (Paige et al., 2004)
 - Found to be very useful for study abroad students (Paige et al., 2004)

Reading strategy assessment

- ***Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI, Mokhtari, 1998-2000)***
 - Assesses metacognitive awareness and reported use of reading strategies
 - Validated with native speaker population (N=825)
 - Overall reliability = .93
 - Subscale reliabilities: metacognitive strategies .92, cognitive strategies .79, support strategies .87
- ***Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS, Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2001)***
 - Assesses metacognitive awareness and reported use of reading strategies
 - Adapted from MARSI for non-native speakers of English; changes included removing redundant items and modifying some wording
 - Overall reliability = .89

Listening strategy assessment

- ***Metacognitive Awareness of Listening Questionnaire (MALQ, Vandergrift et al., 2006)***
 - 21-item questionnaire
 - 5 factors: problem-solving, planning and evaluation, mental translation, person knowledge, and directed attention
 - Assesses metacognitive awareness and reported use of L2 listening strategies
 - Trialed and validated with approximately 1,000 learners in different countries and contexts
 - Reliabilities with a sample (N=425): .68 to .78
 - Confirmatory factor analysis
 - Significant relationship between reported listening strategies and actual listening performance

Other assessments for writing and speaking strategies

Guideline 10. Teachers should give or encourage strategy assistance.

Strategy assistance can come from:

- Systematic, direct strategy instruction embedded in language teaching
- A separate “learning to learn” course
- Learning strategy suggestions in textbooks
- Quick reminders about strategies from time to time
- Specific strategy help for those who need it most
- Peer-to-peer sharing of strategy ideas

More strategy assistance

Strategy assistance can also come from:

- Learner guidebooks
- Language counseling
- Strategy bulletin boards
- Talking to expert language learners
- What other ways?

A final word:

**As teachers, let's never stop
learning about learning
strategies!**

