

行政院國家科學委員會專題研究計畫 成果報告

高中英語學習策略訓練研究

計畫類別：個別型計畫

計畫編號：NSC91-2411-H-018-006-

執行期間：91年08月01日至92年07月31日

執行單位：國立彰化師範大學英語學系暨研究所

計畫主持人：黃聖慧

報告類型：精簡報告

處理方式：本計畫可公開查詢

中 華 民 國 92 年 10 月 15 日

Incorporating Language Learning Strategy Training in Senior High School Lessons

Shenghui Cindy Huang 黃聖慧

National Changhua University of Education

cindy111@ms17.hinet.net

Since the eighties, language-learning strategy training studies started to develop and have gained various training results. Researchers summarized the training results and have proposed sets of language learning strategy training methods and principals. In Taiwan, although researchers paid much attention to language learning strategies in the recent decade, a paucity of studies focused on learning strategy trainings, very few were related to strategy training at the senior high school level. Studies showed that senior high school students generally did not use learning strategies to help their learning, which might have made the increased learning load more difficult, and indirectly hindered students' interests in learning English. English educators have suggested the instructions of language learning strategies to senior high school students to assist their learning. The researchers designed and evaluated a series of language learning strategy integrated lesson plans in one school semester. After two-month training, the experimental group students showed their awareness and use of learning strategies. Also, they demonstrated progress in memorizing vocabulary. Results from the teacher interview and written teaching reflections presented the experimental group instructor's evaluations of the lesson plans along the study. Suggestions are offered in incorporating language learning strategy training into English lessons at senior high school levels.

INTRODUCTION

Starting from the mid-eighties, researchers in second language learning strategy area have paid much attention to the instruction of language learning strategies to learners (Mckeachie et al., 1984; Huang, 1997; Huang, 2000). They claimed that good teaching should include the ways to learn, to remember, to process information, and to become more motivated (Weinstein and Mayer, 1986). The training of language learning strategies mainly comes from four assumptions: mentally active learners being better learners, strategies being teachable, learning strategies being transferred to new tasks, and academic language learning being more effective when accompanied by learning strategies (Chamot and O'Malley, 1987). Chamot (1998)

made a more explicit explanation for the reasons for language learning strategy trainings. She pointed out that the teaching of learning strategies in second language classroom was based on the following rationales. First, in the first and the second language learning context, the strategy use differences between successful and less successful learners have been documented by previous research. Second, most students had the abilities in learning to use language learning strategies in an effective way. Third, many learners need to use learning strategies to solve various problems. Fourth, learning strategy instruction could motivate learners by offering learners the techniques for more effective learning. Fifth, learners would become more independent in learning after they became skillful in using language learning strategies (p. 5).

In the eighties, the studies on language learning strategy training were almost limited to vocabulary learning tasks (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Starting from the nineties, strategy-training studies were spread to include the training of more language skills (Huang, 2000). Although many studies showed the effectiveness of learning strategy training on learners' language learning (O'Malley et al., 1985; Huang, 2000), not all strategy-training projects were successful or conclusive (Oxford, 1993). Oxford (1993) examined the strategy-training studies which showed no or negative effect and concluded that these studies usually "revealed some methodological problems that might have obscured some potentially important findings" (p. 181).

In Taiwan, although researchers paid much attention to language learning strategies in the recent decade (Huang, 2000), a paucity of studies focused on learning strategy trainings, very few were related to strategy training at the senior high school level. English instructions at senior high schools have played an important role in developing students' English level from basic to intermediate or higher. Previous studies showed that senior high school students generally did not use learning strategies to help their learning, which might have made the increased learning load more difficult, and indirectly hindered students' interests in learning English (Huang, 1997). English educators have suggested the instruction of language learning strategies to senior high school students to assist their learning (Ku, 1995; Huang, 1997).

In conducting language learning strategy training, researchers have suggested several ways to improve the success of the training. One of the common points among the suggestions is: strategy training should be integrated into regular L2 with regular language classes (Oxford, 1993; Chamot, 1998).

This study aimed to investigate the effect of integrating language learning strategy training into regular English classes in the senior high school level in Taiwan. The researchers designed lesson plans by combining the content and schedule, which

the school board planned, and the language learning strategies summarized by Oxford (1990). One class from a randomly selected senior high school participated in this study as the experimental group. Another class, which has similar background as the experimental group in the same school, was selected as the control group. All the participants are at the second grade. After the pre-test, the instructor taught the experimental group English by following the lesson plans designed by the researchers (one of the researchers worked as the instructor). The researchers tried to look for the answers for the following questions:

1. Is there any difference for the students in the experimental group in learning strategy use before and after the study?
2. Is there any difference for the students in the experimental group in learning achievements before and after the study?
3. What are the experimental group instructor's feelings and opinions about using the lesson plans?

METHOD

This is an experimental study aiming to investigate the effects of learning strategy integrated lesson plans in the senior high school level. This study took one semester to complete. The participants, instruments used, and the procedure of the study are reported as follows.

Participants

The participants in this study are two classes of second grade students in a randomly selected senior high school. One class was randomly selected from the school as the experimental group. The other class, which shares similar background, like study orientation and English proficiency level, with the class in the experimental group, was chosen from the same grade in the same school to become the control group. The instructor of the class in the experimental group participated in this study to cooperate with the researchers for the lesson plan design, application, and evaluation. The experimental group has 52 students. The control group has 38 students. All the students in the school take five hour regular English classes from Taiwanese instructors, and two hour English conversation classes from native-speaking instructors every week. During the conversation classes, students' Taiwanese instructors need to sit in the classes and assist the native-speaking instructors.

Instrumentation

Two kinds of instruments will be mentioned in the instrumentation session: the instruments used as the treatment, the instruments for collecting data. The instruments served as the treatment are the lesson plans designed by the researchers according to the principles proposed by previous studies (Oxford et al., 1990; Oxford, 1993; Chamot, 1998), the school's schedule in English teaching, and the experimental group instructor's suggestions. A lesson plan sample is given on the appendix.

The instruments used to collect data include: the monthly English exams held by the school, the assignments and quizzes given by the instructor, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), and the instructor's written teaching reflections. The English exams were made by English teachers in the school, which were held monthly to evaluate students' learning achievements. The SILL was developed by Oxford (1990) to investigate learners' use of language learning strategies, and has been widely used by language learning strategy researchers. The reliability and validity of the SILL have been identified as high by previous studies (Huang, 2000, pp. 41-43).

Procedure

In the first month of the study, no treatment was conducted with the experimental group. After the first monthly exam, the SILL was conducted with both the experimental group and the control group to obtain the results of the pre-test. Moreover, the first monthly exam results were recorded. After the first monthly exam, the instructor in the experimental group did her teaching according to the language learning strategy integrated lesson plans. She started to write teaching reflections after each class. The assignments, the quizzes given by the instructor were collected. Also, the second and the third monthly exam results were recorded. At the end of the semester, the SILL questionnaire was conducted with all the student participants. Furthermore, at the same time, the instructor of the experimental group was interviewed for her opinions and feelings about the use of the strategy-integrated lesson plans. Finally, the instructor's written teaching reflections were collected after the interview.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In accordance with the study questions, results are presented and discussed in terms of the answers for the three study questions: the students' learning strategy use differences before and after the study, the students' learning achievement differences before and after the study, and the experimental group teacher's feelings and opinions about using the lesson plans.

Students' learning strategy use differences

The results from the questionnaire, the SILL, showed statistically significant differences for the experimental group between the pre-test and the post-test. The mean of the SILL frequency increased from 2.70 to 2.83 ($p < 0.05$). For the control group, although the mean of the SILL frequency increased from 2.57 to 2.77, there showed no statistical significance ($p > 0.05$). Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and the comparisons between the pre and post mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in strategy use.

Table 1

Mean, standard deviation, and comparisons in language learning strategy use

Group	Test	Mean	SD	means compared	t	p-value
Experi.	pre-test	2.7063	0.5655			
	post-test	2.8392	0.5624			
				experi. pre vs. post	2.331	0.024*
Control	pre-test	2.5700	0.4614			
	post-test	2.7768	0.5365			
				control pre vs. post	1.796	0.081

* $p < .05$

The results above present that the class taught with learning strategy integrated lesson plans did use more learning strategies than before. The class which did not use learning strategy integrated lesson plans did not show statistically significant more use of learning strategies than before. At least two points are derived from the results. First, the instruction of language learning strategies helps students' use of learning strategies. This point supports one of the assumptions proposed by previous studies for language learning strategy training in that strategies being teachable (Rubin, 1975; Chamot and O'Malley, 1987). The initiation of studies in language learning strategies was derived from the assumption that teachers could help their less successful students improve their performance by applying learning strategies used by successful learners. The results of the study may demonstrate the assumption being true.

The second point lies on the fact that integrating learning strategy training into regular class schedule does not take a long time for the senior high school students to become used to applying learning strategies. It took about as long as two months. Huang (2000) conducted a learning strategy training study with college English learning students. In her study, the strategy trainings were independent from regular English classes. It took about three months, three hours a week, for the college students to become used to use language learning strategies than before. However, in

this study, senior high school students, who had less English learning experience than college students and were supposed to take longer in becoming used to applying language learning strategies, turned out to take shorter time period than college students did. This result supports one of the main principles proposed by previous studies that strategy instructions need to integrate with regular language classes (Oxford, 1993; Chamot, 1998).

Students' learning achievement differences

The results from the monthly exams are shown as follows. At the first exam, the pre-test, the experimental group obtained an average score of 60.6 in English test, which was ranked seven among the eleven classes of the same grade. The control group obtained an average score of 62.1 in English test, which was ranked six among the eleven classes of the same grade. After the treatment, at the second monthly exam, the experimental group obtained an average score of 69.1 in English test, which was ranked six. The control group obtained an average score of 68.6, which was ranked seven. At the third monthly exam, the experimental group had an average score of 58.5, which was ranked six. The control group gained an average score of 59.9, which was ranked five. Table 2 shows the average scores and rankings of the experimental group and the control group from the first monthly exam to the third monthly exam.

Table 2

Average scores, rankings through three monthly exams

Group	Exam	Average score	Ranking
Experimental	1	60.6	7
	2	69.1	6
	3	58.5	6
Control	1	62.1	6
	2	68.6	7
	3	59.9	5

The results present that the experimental group students' English achievement scores did not show significant difference from what they obtained before the study. However, from the experimental group instructor's interviews and written teaching reflections, the students in the experimental group generally did better jobs in memorizing vocabulary, and in listening and speaking along the study, which could be observed from the progress the students performed in conversation classes and in vocabulary quizzes. The results shown above could be discussed from two aspects. First, in this study, the strategy training content might not directly relate to the items in the monthly exam. For example, among the six categories of the language learning

strategies proposed by Oxford (1990), only the strategies in the memory category and in the cognitive category were directly related to the items shown on the monthly exams. Strategies in other categories, like in the metacognitive category, the social category, compensatory category, and even the affective category were not directly tested on the monthly exams. The purpose of applying language learning strategies is to facilitate the language learning process to “improve the development of their [learners’] language skills” (Oxford and Cohen, 1992, p.1). The results of the monthly exams, which contain items mainly in testing learners’ reading and writing skills, might not be able to demonstrate all the learners’ English skills in terms of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Secondly, the progress of experimental group students’ vocabulary memorization might be related to the instruction of memory strategies. It seems that in the senior high school level, the goal of memory strategy instruction could be faster to obtain than the goals of the instructions of strategies in other categories.

The experimental group instructor’s feelings and opinions

The experimental group instructor’s feelings and opinions about using the English learning strategy integrated lesson plans are presented in terms of the following points: the teaching in the class, the students’ reactions, and students’ language learning.

The instructor indicated that at the beginning, when she started to use the language learning strategy integrated lesson plans in the class, her students felt uneasy. For example, she used to teach vocabulary before teaching reading. However, in the lesson plans, usually reading instructions went before vocabulary instructions. “At the beginning, several times they [my students] told me ‘Teacher, would you please teach the vocabulary first before you start the lesson?’.... After using the learning strategy integrated lesson plans in three lessons, the students were little by little used to my teaching from the reading section, in stead of from the vocabulary part,” said the instructor happily, “Also, I found they [my students] are accustomed to use scanning and skimming skills in understanding reading instead of checking for new words in the dictionary all the time.” It seems that the application of the learning strategy integrated lesson plans help students become used to learning strategy applications.

According to the instructor, “...students became more interested in English learning in the class.” The instructor said, “one of the students told me, ‘If I [the student] could have learned these learning strategies, I would not have thought that learning English were difficult.’ and another said, ‘Now, having known these strategies, I think it is easier to learn English no matter I am learning listening, speaking, reading, or writing.’” Moreover, during the class, the instructor would

sometimes check the students' strategy use. She was quite satisfied with the students' progress. In her written teaching reflections, the instructor indicated, "I found more and more students would try to guess the meanings of new words from the context in a reading instead of directly consulting dictionaries. They told me they found that these strategies are useful in helping them prolong their memory span." It seems that the positive learning reactions from the students encouraged the instructor.

Regarding the language skill learning of the experimental group students, the instructor mentioned that, "I think the most transparent improvement was the vocabulary learning." She said, "After teaching them [the students] various vocabulary learning strategies, one of my students told me, 'Teacher, now I don't have to spend a lot of time in reciting the new words and I can use the ways you showed me to read other materials, such as the articles in newspapers and magazines.'" The instructor said that according to her observations, students usually used several vocabulary learning strategies to memorize one word after this study. In learning the reading skill, at the beginning of the study, students asked the instructor to start with vocabulary teaching. However, at the end of the study, students "do not refuse to use the reading learning strategies", said the instructor. In learning the listening skill, the instructor said, "After the several trainings which were related to listening strategies, they [the students] got higher scores in listening tests and were more confident. In the past, when they heard a new word in a listening task, they stayed at the word and often were lost in the statement. Now they discover the strategies, like selective listening and guessing intelligently, are effective methods to help their listening comprehension."

The interview results present that, overall, the instructor was quite satisfied with the function of using the learning strategy integrated lesson plans. She said, "I found it was more useful to teach students learning strategies than just to explain the meanings [content] of a lesson."

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Several points could be concluded from the results of the study. First, it is feasible to incorporate language learning strategies into current English teaching context in the senior high school level in Taiwan. The results, which show that language learning strategies being teachable, make the assumption that less successful students becoming good language learners possible. Second, the learning strategy integrated lesson plans appear to be better for students to become familiar with the use of the strategies than independent strategy training designs. The learning strategy integrated lesson plans are recommended to be used in language learning strategy

training programs. Third, in this study, the students' learning achievement tests, the test on partial writing and reading abilities, does not show as a valid tool to demonstrate students' language learning results after learning with the learning strategy integrated lesson plans. To fix this problem, researchers are suggested to adopt test types and items which correspond to the goals of the lesson plans to improve the content validity of the evaluation tool (Hughes, 1989). Fourth, both the experimental group students and their instructor experienced the effect of the learning strategy integrated lesson plans on students' language learning. At the beginning, most of the students appeared to be uncomfortable with the "new" instruction pattern their teacher brought in. However, with the confidence and insistence the instructor demonstrated, the students learned the language learning strategies and gained the joy of English learning through the use of the strategies. The result implies that instructors' attitudes toward the applications of new lesson plans play an important role on the success of the lesson plans. Fifth, the instruction of memory strategies showed prominent function among all the strategies in this study. Previous studies discovered that English learning in Taiwan demands a great amount of memorization. However, students did not use memory strategies well, which have caused their frustration and fear in English learning (Huang, 1997; Hong and Huang, 1998). The instruction results and experience of this study might increase English teachers' confidence in applying memory strategy instructions.

In this study, the participants all came from social science classes. It is suggested that studies need to be done with natural science students in the future to obtain a more comprehensive view of the application of the lesson plans to students with different study orientations. Furthermore, the data collection tools were suggested to include student interviews, student written learning reflections, and class observations to reveal facts from different aspects.

REFERENCES

Chamot, A. U. (1998). Teaching learning strategies to language students. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 433 719)

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1987). The cognitive academic language learning approach: A bridge to the mainstream. TESOL Quarterly, 21,227-249.

Hong, S. C., & Huang, S. C. (1998). Memory strategies used by non-English major EFL students. Proceedings of the Seventh International Symposium on English Teaching.(pp. 395-405). Taipei: The Crane Publishing Co., Ltd.

Huang, S. C. (1997). Taiwanese Senior High School Students' EFL Learning: Focus on Learning Strategies and Learning Beliefs. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI

Company.

Huang, S. C. (2000). English Learning Strategy Training: Process, Activities, and Effect. Taipei: The Crane Publishing Co., Ltd.

Hughes, A. (1989). Testing for Language Teachers. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ku, P. Y. (1995). Strategies Associated with Proficiency and Predictors of Strategy Choice: A Study on Language Learning Strategies of EFL Students at Three Educational Levels in Taiwan. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Company.

McKeachie, W. J. et al. (1984). Teaching learning strategies. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Canada. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 255 141)

O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., Stewner-Manzanares, G., Russo, R. P., & Kupper, L. (1985). Learning strategy applications with students of English as a second language. TESOL Quarterly, 19, (3), 557-584.

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). Learning strategies in second language acquisition. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know. New York, NY: Newbury House Publishers.

Oxford, R. L. (1993). Research on second language learning strategies. Annual review of Applied Linguistics, 13, 175-187.

Oxford, R. L., & Cohen, A. D. (1992). Language learning strategies: Crucial issues of concept and classification. Applied Language Learning, 3 (1&2), 1-35.

Oxford, R., Crookall, D., Cohen, A., Lavine, R., Nyikos, M., & Sutter, W. (1990). Strategy training for language learners: Six situational case studies and a training model. Foreign Language Annals, 22 (3), 197-216.

Rubin, J. (1975). What the "good language learner" can teach us. TESOL Quarterly, 9, 41-51.

Weinstein, C. E., & Mayer, R. E. (1986). The teaching of learning strategies. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching (3rd ed. Pp. 315-327). New York: Macmillan.

APPENDIX

高二 Lesson 7 (fall 2001)

頁數	時間	活動細節	策略				
124 125	20	<p>第一節</p> <p>■ 對話</p> <p>1. Guessing intelligently—applying titles and pictures: 教導同學利用標題及圖片，先猜測此對話內容，這樣可以幫助理解</p> <p>2. Listening for main ideas: 教導同學在使用此方法時，應注意的為 who, what, where, when, how, and key words.</p> <p>3. Taking notes: 教導同學在使用此方法時，應記住重點，例如，在知道 main ideas 之後，同學們知道此篇是在講 Mother Teresa 和 Princess Diana 的相同處與不同處，因此，同學們在 take notes 時，記下相同處(help others)及不同處(lifestyle) 的地方為何 (in what way)。同時可以教導學生有效的做筆記，如畫表</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin: 10px 0;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">Similarity</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Differences</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Similarity	Differences			<p>Guessing intelligently—applying titles and pictures</p> <p>Listening for main ideas</p> <p>Taking notes</p>
Similarity	Differences						
125 126	20	<p>■ 聽力</p> <p>1. Guessing intelligently: 教導學生可以先看看答案的部分，例如第一題的答案都是 in 開頭，所以應指地方，第二題跟第四題都是 because 開頭，所以應指理由，第三題都是不定詞開頭，所以應是問 how/what 之類的訊息，如此在聽的時候可以找出應聽的重點。</p>	Guessing intelligently				
126 127	10	<p>■ 發音</p> <p>1. Recognizing and reasoning: 教導學生先找出圖示””，“-“，及”.”的不同，配合 Selective listening 做確認，自己找出的規則，在學習上較有意義，也較印象深刻</p> <p>2. Selective listening: 教導學生將注意力放在重音，一次聽一個重點，這樣的聽法較易聽到所要的訊息</p>	Recognizing and reasoning				

	<p>3. Practicing—repeating: 讓同學們跟著錄音帶念，教導他們，在發音方面，可以藉由反覆練習感受重音，增加敏感度，並增加熟練度</p>	<p>Selective listening</p> <p>Practicing—repeating</p>
--	---	--