

# **Reconsidering a strategy-based instruction (SBI) to teaching and learning another language using transferrable language learning strategies within a sociocultural framework**

## **Reconsideración de una instrucción basada en estrategias para enseñar y aprender otro idioma, usando estrategias transferibles de aprendizaje de lenguas dentro de un marco sociocultural**

Mario R. Moya

M.Moya@uel.ac.uk

Senior Lecturer, Programme Leader Masters of Art in English Language Teaching, University of East London, Inglaterra

### **Abstract**

Following the announcements concerning introducing and developing modern languages in Key Stage Two in England, although not a new initiative, prompted the need to train generalist primary trainee teachers in teaching modern languages. After the initial announcement of the introduction of the *English Baccalaureate* in the secondary school, the poor outcomes achieved by England in the European languages survey and the news that languages would be part of the primary curriculum contributed to refreshing the agenda of languages in a country where teaching and learning other languages are seen as an exception rather than the norm. In order to provide primary school trainee teachers with the skills necessary for teaching young learners languages at an ab-initio level, this paper focuses on increasing subject knowledge and pedagogical competence in a short time by developing trainees' prior knowledge and reflective practice, broadly following the tradition of strategy-based instruction, but within a social constructivist understanding of learning. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to review the theoretical perspectives of Chamot's model to reinterpret it so that it accommodates the complexities of the learning environment, learners' identity, their interactions in a community of practice as well as the demands of the context, but acknowledging the trainees' prior linguistic knowledge, their knowledge of the world and their motivation for learning other languages, as we believe these are necessary conditions to consider when designing effective pedagogical interventions aimed at adult learners.

**Key words:** *language teaching, strategy-based instruction, language learning strategies, socio-cultural approach.*

## Resumen

Siguiendo los anuncios relacionados con la introducción y el desarrollo de idiomas modernos en la segunda etapa de la escolarización primaria en Inglaterra, aunque no es una nueva iniciativa, ha despertado la necesidad de formar a los futuros profesores generalistas de educación primaria en el ámbito de la enseñanza de las lenguas. A esto se suma la introducción de la certificación denominada *English Baccalaureate* en la escuela secundaria, los bajos resultados obtenidos en la encuesta europea de idiomas y las noticias referidas a la obligatoriedad de estudiar otros idiomas en el currículo de la educación primaria, ha contribuido a retomar la agenda de la enseñanza de idiomas en un país en el que la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de estos son más bien una excepción. A los efectos de proveer a los futuros profesores de primaria con las habilidades necesarias para enseñar idiomas a niños a un nivel ab-initio, este artículo se centró en el desarrollo del conocimiento lingüístico y las competencias pedagógicas a corto plazo para desarrollar los saberes previos y la práctica reflexiva, siguiendo la tradición de la instrucción estratégica pero desde una perspectiva socio constructivista. El propósito de esta comunicación es, por consiguiente, considerar las perspectivas teóricas sobre las cuales se fundamenta el modelo de instrucción estratégica de Chamot para reinterpretarlo, de modo tal que incluya las complejidades del ambiente de aprendizaje, la identidad de los discentes, sus interacciones en una comunidad de práctica, al igual que las necesidades del contexto, pero teniendo en cuenta los saberes previos de los profesores en formación, sus conocimientos del mundo y sus motivaciones para aprender otras lenguas, creemos que tales consideraciones son necesarias para diseñar intervenciones pedagógicas eficaces destinadas a discentes adultos.

**Palabras clave:** *enseñanza de idiomas, instrucción estratégica, estrategias de aprendizaje de idiomas, modelo socio-cultural.*

## Rationale

This paper results from a research project concerned with the development of teaching capacity within a Primary Post-graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)<sup>1</sup> course to equip generalist trainees with the necessary skills and competences to learn and teach modern languages to young learners. Modern languages have been seen as a highly specialised subject area in the curriculum, requiring a specialist teacher, usually a ‘linguist’, to impart knowledge in a classroom. In this paper, our position is that a language specialist is a speaker of any language who, by virtue of being an expert user of one, which we call L1 or mother tongue, already possesses the linguistic skills that can be used to learn another language (L2) (Saville-Troike, 2012). These transferrable skills that speakers of any

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<sup>1</sup> A PGCE course runs for 44 weeks and involves academic input followed by two assessed school placements. The successful completion of the course leads to the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), which is the initial professional certification enabling holders to work as teachers in state-funded schools.

languages employ have traditionally been seen as learnt behaviours, which have been internalised and exist at the level of the subconscious mind.

We argue that these skills, which are called language strategies, need to be identified and be made conscious as a necessary stage for L2 learning, but the identification, recall and use of such strategies depend on the learning context as well as the needs of the learners rather than by being imposed as we see this as fragmenting and, consequently, limiting the students' learning experience.

## Literature Review

The concept of language-learning strategies has gained increased attention within the field of second language learning theory since it was first introduced by Rubin in the 1970s. The underlying principle in the study of language-learning strategies is based upon the fact that, when individuals learn a language (L1), they use a set of unconscious behaviours. Subsequently, these behaviours become automated as a result of repeated use (Rubin, 1975; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Cohen & Macaro, 2007; Oxford, 2011).

Language learning strategies have been defined as 'activities consciously chosen by learners for the purpose of regulating their own learning' (Griffith, 2007, p. 2), 'techniques or devices a learner may use to acquire knowledge' (Rubin, 1975, p. 43), or 'specific actions, behaving as former steps or techniques students employ to improve their progress in internalising, storing, retrieving, and using the L2' (Nyikos & Oxford, 1993, p. 175). Cohen (1984, p. 101) states that language learning strategies include 'how learners attend to language input, how learners arrive at spoken utterances, how readers process a text, how writers generate a text, and how vocabulary is learned initially and retrieved subsequently'; this process develops in tandem with the process of language acquisition creating specific linguistic skills.

Grenfell & Harris (1999) argue that L1 acquisition involves a natural biological processing, which is part of the innate language ability of the mind. However, this perspective adds that language strategies in L2 involve a habit-forming practice, which means a process of skill-acquisition. Following the observations of the different behaviours put into practice by a 'good language learner'. Rubin (1975), as cited by Stern (1991), identifies ten strategies: planning, active, empathetic, formal, experimental, semantic, practice, communication, monitoring, and internalisation. Rubin (1975) also indicates that good language learners like to communicate with others (communication strategy), and are tolerant and outgoing with native speakers of the language they are learning (empathetic strategy). They plan according to a personal learning style (planning strategy) and practice willingly (practice strategy). They do have the technical know-how concerning language (formal strategy), and develop an increasingly separate mental system in which they are able to brainstorm ideas in L2 (into novelisation strategy), and also search for meaning (semantic strategy). At the same time, although they are methodical in approach, there is

the willingness to be flexible and constantly look to revise their linguistic understandings (experimental strategy).

Similarly, Stern (1991) complement the list of strategies identified by Oxford & Crookall (1989) and classify them as follows:

- Cognitive strategies: skills that involve the manipulation or transformation of the language in some direct way, such as through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, functional practice in naturalistic settings, and formal practice with structures and sounds.
- Memory strategy techniques specifically tailored to help the learner store new information in memory and retrieve it later.
- Compensation strategies: behaviours used to compensate for missing knowledge of some kind, such as inferencing (guessing) whilst listening or reading, or using synonyms or circumlocution whilst speaking or writing.
- Communication strategies: typically taken to mean only those compensation strategies used when speaking; however, communication occurs in the three other language skill areas (reading, listening, and writing) as well as in speaking, and so the popular term ‘communication strategies’ is a misnomer.
- Metacognitive strategies: behaviours used for centring, arranging, planning, and evaluating one’s learning. These ‘beyond-the-cognitive’ strategies are used to provide ‘executive control’ over the learning process.
- Affective strategies: techniques such as self-reinforcement and positive self-talk, which can go some way to helping learners to gain better control over their emotions, attitudes, and motivations related to language learning.
- Social strategies: actions involving other people in the language learning process. Examples are questioning and cooperating.

When learning another language in a formal setting, such as a classroom, learners can be made conscious of these *unconscious* cognitive processes used in L1 by reflecting on them. This can be achieved by a process of verbalisation where learners explain what they are doing whilst using a strategy or and how they have achieved a particular language outcome, a process which can facilitate the conscious transfer of skills from L1 to L2. The move from one familiar language to an unfamiliar one can be enhanced further by using experiential knowledge or knowledge of the world to encourage language comprehension and hence support L2 production.

### **A historical overview of the research on language learning strategies**

Oxford (2011) indicates that the focus on learning strategies developed as a result of a change in paradigm when the stimulus-response perspective was overturned by the emerging views of cognitive psychology. During the 1950 and 1960, although strategy as a

concept was not mentioned as such, Piaget (1954), when describing cognitive processes, identified certain behaviours, such as recognising logical relationships, classifying, ordering, analysing, problem-solving, which are similar to the cognitive strategies mentioned in the Oxford & Crookall taxonomy (1989). Other contributions came from Miller (1956), Miller, Galante & Pribam (1960), Mandler (1967) and Rothkopf (1970). Miller (1956) indicated that because of the limited nature of memory, it was necessary to chunk information by classifying and synthesising items, whilst Miller, Galante & Pribam (1960) acknowledged that planning was necessary to meet simple and complex goals, including learning. Mandler (1967) developed Miller's information-chunking theory further by discussing organisational strategies for memory, whilst Rothkopf (1970) analysed intentional learning-creating (mathemagenic) behaviours such as querying a text.

Although this theoretical development was formulated in 1938, a further influence came from Vygotsky's (1978) notion of self-regulation. He sustained that learners internalise cognitive processes, such as analysing, synthesising, planning, monitoring and evaluating, through social mediation when interacting with more knowledgeable others or by mediation by a cultural tool such as language, books, and technologies until the processes become inner speech.

During the 1970s, Selinker (1972) proposed a distinction between language learning strategies and language use strategies, but other researchers such as Rubin (1975), Naiman, Frohlich & Tedesco (1975) and Stern (1975) focused on the identification and description of the strategies used by a prototypical good language learner, typically corresponding to an extroverted and uninhibited individual who is not afraid of making mistakes.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s there were further developments with O'Neil (1978) and O'Neil & Spielberger (1979) emphasising the importance of cognitive strategies (for the development of information-processing and mental schemas), metacognitive strategies (for the executive control over the cognitive strategies) and affective strategies (for the management of emotions and motivation). Flavell (1979), elaborating on the metacognitive strategies, such as planning, monitoring and evaluation, referred to 'metacognitive regulation', which requires 'metacognitive knowledge' (or knowledge of the self, the task and strategies) and defined metacognition as the combination of metacognitive regulation and metacognitive knowledge.

The research undertaken during the 1980s was largely based upon three areas: L2 learner autonomy, the good language learner, as opposed to less effective learners, and theory-building and testing (Oxford, 2011). Holec (1980) elaborated on the concepts of 'autonomy' and 'self-direction', the former referring to the L2 learner's attitude of responsibility, whilst the latter was used to refer to the learning mode, situations or strategies in which the attitude was manifested. A major development on the understanding of the use of language learning strategies was facilitated by Holec who sustained that L2 learners, in self-study modes, can make major decisions about learning, from objectives

through to evaluation. Bialystok (1981) found that the strategies which were pertaining to functional practice remained useful at all levels of L2 proficiency, whilst others required for formal practice (such as grammar-based ones) were less effective as learners advanced in their L2 knowledge. Reiss (1985) revisited the theme of the good language learner to find that less effective ones apply strategies randomly and desperately; however, they generally use as many strategies as the good language learners. Reiss (1985) argued that a good language learner is neither extroverted nor mistake-uninhibited as first proposed by Stern (1975). Anderson (1983) discussed a model of cognitive information-processing identifying two general types of knowledge, which were referred to as 'declarative' (for facts, definitions and rules, stored in the memory as 'nodes') and 'procedural' (for automatised skills, stored in the memory as 'if-then' production systems).

During the 1990s and 2000, Cohen (1998) proposed a distinction between language use and language learning following Selinker's (1972) views; however, he focused on learning strategy instruction and assessment, where teachers play a very important role in supporting learners become more aware, autonomous and proficient. Grenfell & Harris (1999) presented a multistage strategy model of instruction, highlighting the internalisation of strategies leading to their automatic use. McDonough (1999) argued that although the teaching of L2 learning strategies is not universally successful, success can be achieved when strategy instruction is embedded into regular teaching. Oxford (1999), drawing on a Vygotskian perspective of learner self-regulation, discussed that overt strategy instruction is often necessary and presented quantitative findings on the relationships between L2 proficiency and assessed strategy use. Ryan & Deci (2000) focused on the relationships between self-determination (a concept related to self-regulation) and motivation, but they did not discuss the role of strategies in L2 learning.

During the decade of 2000, Hurd, Bevan & Ortega (2001) investigated autonomy-stimulating, strategy-rich courses linking learning strategies to task needs in an online environment. Rubin (2001) focused on the role of metacognitive learner self-management in distance learning and Schramm (2001) encouraged the development of new strategy phenomena, in particular those related to dissociated translation and compensatory elaboration.

### **Cognitivist approach underpinning L2 teaching and learning**

Most of the current approaches to teaching and learning modern languages in Teacher Training and Education in the United Kingdom, including those concerning language learning strategies, have emerged from the perspective of cognitive psychology, based on the idea that language is a variable that can be manipulated in a classroom to foster effective acquisition (McLahlan, 2009).

Following the cognitive science, the mind plays a very important role in learning; this view underpins different theories that direct attention to the activity of the learner in

creating a response, and to the nature of knowledge itself. A key feature of cognitive theories is that knowledge is constructed through interaction with the environment using the analogy of a computer model to describe the functions of the mind. Such explanation considers that the environment is constantly providing the individual with input (incoming information), which is followed by the data processing that takes place in the brain, followed by a determined output—an operation known as propositional encoding—set out as algebraic formulae (Bly & Rumelhart, 1999). Learning is a cognitive process involving the acquisition of new information, enabling the learner to evolve and transform their existing knowledge. This then allows them to check out and apply the new state of knowledge to new situations, and so the process goes on. New patterns of meaning and understanding are formed to enable further learning to take place (Armitage, Bryant & Dunnill, 2003). Bloom (1965) indicates that learning takes place not only in the cognitive demand, but also in the affective realm. According to Pinker (1994) cognitive learning comprises the recall and cognition of knowledge, comprehension, understanding of the material, the active exploration, the application of the comprehended knowledge in concrete situations, the examination of each new situation by analysis of its constituted parts leading to a synthesis into new concepts, and finally evaluation in which the learner assess the value of the new knowledge in relation to the realisation of their goals. On the affective side, Anderson (2007) explains that there is a similar progression: receiving stimuli, developing awareness, being willing to receive, eventually using selective attention, responding willingly, the emergence of a sense of satisfaction with the response, valuing the concepts and the process they are engaged in, expressing preferences and eventually commitment, then conceptualising, attaching concepts to each of the values identified, and finally, organising these values into a system that comes to characterise each individual.

Language learning strategies, from a cognitive perspective, enable learners to process the input they receive allowing them to perform a task successfully. According to Fedderholt (1997), although these strategies are non-observable and used unconsciously, the observation of how learners use them provide a good indication of how they approach a task and can give teachers insightful views about how to plan teaching so that learners can select the necessary skills to understand, learn and remember new input.

### **A critique to the cognitive approach**

The cognitive theory views L2 learning as a conscious and reasoned thinking process which involves the deliberate use of learning strategies. These strategies are special ways of processing information with the aim of enhancing comprehension, learning or retention of information. According to Eysenck (2010) the cognitive theory considers that knowledge systems can be built up and they can be called on automatically. For this to happen, it is necessary for learners to focus on the aspects of the L2 they are trying to understand or produce. They acknowledge that it is through experience and practice that learners can use certain parts of their knowledge in an automatic way without them being aware of it.

According to Dakin's seminal work (1973), a cognitive approach to L2 teaching and learning can be summarised as developing an awareness of the rules of language. This means that learners' responses to language tasks are the result of insight and intentional patterning. Dakin (1973) argues that insight can be directed to (a) the concepts behind language (traditional grammar) and (b) to language as an operation (sets of communicative functions).

The planning of learning an L2 incorporates a range of activities which are practised in new situations simulating real life. The cognitive approach views this practice as a way to facilitate assimilation of what has been learned or partly learned. At the same time, planning creates further situations for which existing language skills are inadequate and required to be modified or extended. This is seen as accommodation. The resulting product ensures the development of L2 awareness and a continuing supply of learning goals, developing learners' motivation.

This perspective considers learning and the environment as variables that can be handled to obtain effective results; however, this view reduces the scope of the multiple factors occurring with the learner and his/her environment. This means that the input-process-output taking place at the level of the mind becomes mechanistic and deterministic and, ultimately, does not consider the cultural and social factors influencing individuals' behaviours. In the field of second language acquisition, Spolsky (1989) cited in Mitchell, Myles & Marsden (2013, p.5) argue that the research in this field 'has historically been too preoccupied with the cognition of the individual learner, and sociocultural dimensions have been neglected'. In the same vein, McGilly (1996) argues that the cognitive approach to L2 learning limits students' learning experience simply because they employ memory procedures in the classroom. The author claims that these skills are not enough and that learners need to be prepared for higher language learning skills evolving from the cognitive approach.

In fact, the traditional cognitive perspective for second language learning, according to Mitchell *et al* (2013, p.186) 'pays no attention to learner identity or the learning group as a community, sociolinguistic and cultural dimensions of learners' language practices are not usually seen as relevant', with Gass & Mackey (2007) asserting that the sociocultural context is beyond the scope of a cognitive interpretation of second language acquisition and development. Acknowledging this limitation and, in order to produce a more accurate interpretation of L2 learning, Firth & Wagner (2007, p. 807) claim that 'language is an essentially social phenomenon, and second language learning itself is a social accomplishment, which is situated in social interaction'.

Another criticism to the cognitive approach emerges from the relationships between learners with other peers in a learning context. A language strategy, according to the cognitive view, is only seen as a behaviour that can be manipulated first by a teacher and



then by an archetypal good learner. The context of any learning situation is created intentionally by the teacher. Zheng (2010), on the other hand, indicates that the manipulation of the learning context reflects the cognitivist paradigm, which considers the manipulation of variables in order to understand the relationships between the context and the learning process. However, this view does not take into consideration learners' individual differences or the relationships between learners. Greeno (1997) and Lave & Wenger (1991) acknowledge that learning is situationally grounded, indicating that '[it] is an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world' (p.35), pointing out that learning is distributed amongst learners. Lave & Wenger (1991) also claim that it is not possible to separate learners from their learning environment whilst acknowledging that all learning activities, either individual or collective, entail a social context. This social context reflects the social practice of human beings.

A further criticism to the cognitive approach is the fragmentation of language to encourage accuracy and proficiency. The cognitive perspective considers that competence in another language involves the mastery of discreet units of grammar (syntax, morphology and lexis) and holds that these units need to be carefully graded in such a way that simple linguistic structures lead to more complex ones (Hicks & Young, 1973; Lim, Reiser & Olina, 2009). This view presumes that complex cognitive skills can be learned if independent subskills are learned first in situations involving individual practice. This perspective, however, does not take into consideration the presence or the absence of a social need to use the L2. Cobb & Bowers (1999), Choi and Hannafin (1995) and Greeno (1997) emphasise the fact that everyday cognition involves authentic and collaborative environments and that learning should develop students' abilities to participate in valued social practices. In this sense, learners' identities are more important than the mere collection of cognitive subskills.

A major drawback of the cognitive approach is its failure to acknowledge that language and learning entails a particular view of how language and social interaction are intertwined. The learning of an L2 has to take into consideration the view that:

Language production is not a memory exercise but that the process has a profound effect on the development of thinking as it is not possible to understand the nature of thinking, learning and development without taking account of the intrinsically social and communicative nature of human life' (OpenLearn, 2015).

This shift in perspective from the cognitive realm to a social context offers new possibilities to study language learning as a social practice whilst considering learners as active participants in the construction of the learning. These views were developed by Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural approach and supported by Halliday's (1994) functional linguistics.

## A socio-cultural approach to learning

A socio-constructivist approach abandons the idea that L2 interaction can be viewed as a source of input to be parsed by internal learning mechanisms. Interaction itself becomes a central area as this view considers that this is, in fact, what constitutes the learning process, which is ubiquitously social rather than individual in nature (Mitchell *et al.*, 2013). Although this approach is not new (Hatch, 1978), it has received a particular attention from the 1990s onwards.

Vygotsky (1987) identifies two concepts deemed necessary to facilitate the understanding of his views in relation to language, which are *mediation* and *meaning*. Minick (1987, p. 138) indicates that *mediation* refers to ‘the process by which socially meaningful activities transform impulsive, unmediated, and natural behaviour into higher mental processes through the use of instruments or tools’. According to Eun & Lim (2009) in the process of development, for example, children’s direct (unmediated) memory develops into mediated memory (remembering by means of language or other signs). *Meaning*, as understood by Vygotsky does not refer to a conceptual construct that helps speakers to identify and to refer to things (as in the ideational function of language in Halliday’s term), but it refers to ‘the degree of generalization and objectivity, namely, meanings that allow social communication to become possible across contexts’ (Eun & Lim 2009, p. 16).

According to Eun & Lim (2009, p. 16) Vygotsky’s developmental theory:

Emphasises mediation and meaning because the mechanism underlying development, including linguistic development, occurs through social interaction. Development is made possible and fostered by meaningful exchanges between people (...). In the initial stages of language acquisition, people first focus on the meaning of words and only later focus on the forms.

Mutual understanding of the meaning contained in the speech of interlocutors is what makes linguistic development possible. As can be seen from the above discussion, the developmental process in the Vygotskian perspective is always initiated between people (that is, the intermental plane), and only gradually moves into the individual’s psychological plane (that is, the intramental plane). In other words, people develop through interactions with others that are conducted primarily by means of the linguistic system. Throughout this process, people internalise the forms of behaviour and language used between individuals.

This internalisation is guided by the process of linguistic mediation. In addition to the symbolic mediator (language), human mediators play significant roles because social interaction involving two or more people provides the basis for internalisation and consequently development (Eun & Lim 2009, p. 17).

Vygotsky (1987) notes that the learning of an L2 has its foundation in the knowledge of one's L1, and further argues that the semantic aspects of a word were acquired before the actual name of the word. This view is shared by Peirce (in Hoopes, 1991) in his theory of the sign and it means that learning an L2 ultimately depends on the developed semantic system of the L1. A learner learns conceptually first by depending on his/her L1 and masters the actual name of the word in an L2 only later.

Finally, Minick (1987) acknowledges that Vygotsky was particularly aware of the fact that, in speech, forms do not usually map directly into one meaning. Both lexically and grammatically, polysemy (multiple meanings) prevails: because of this nature of the relationship between form and meaning, he emphasises the importance of pragmatic competence in language development. These views have been followed by others such as Mitchell & Myles (2004) and Lantolf & Thorne (2006).

In order to understand language, first it is necessary to understand the social environment because this has a crucial role to play in terms of learning as it emerges from the interactions the learner has with other individuals. Swain & Lapkin (1998, p.321) indicate that 'the co-construction of linguistic knowledge in dialogue is language learning in progress'. Dialogic interactions contribute to and complement the individual's internal development. The 'law of cultural development' (Vygotsky, 1978) explains that the adult and child interact, and together construct new knowledge (intermental stage); only through following this stage is it considered possible for the child to internalise the new knowledge for reflection and understanding (intramental stage). In order to clarify the relationship between intermental and intramental processes, there is a metaphorical space referred to as 'Zone of Proximal Development' between the child's level of current ability to solve a particular problem and the potential ability, which can be achieved with the careful assistance of someone else, usually a more knowledgeable expert. This special assistance is known as 'scaffolding'—a term coined by Wood, Bruner & Ross (1976). The expert and novice engage in a problem-solving task, where the expert intervenes to provide sufficient scaffolding in order to achieve the task and to encourage the novice to persevere in the task. Learning and intellectual development are embedded in contextual and effective dialogue between the expert and the novice, which can accelerate individual learning processes (Pinter, 2011). Such processes take place in the 'zone of intermental development'—a space for teacher and learner to use talk and joint activity (Mercer, 2000).

From a socio-cultural perspective, children's early language learning arises from processes of meaning-making in collaboration with other members of a given culture. Lantolf & Thorne (2006) argue that the view that best complements socio-cultural theory is that of an emergent system, in which people 'develop a repertoire of linguistic devices, to produce and interpret communicative intentions' (p.173).

Using the context of a socio-cultural approach Mitchell *et al.* (2013, p.227), in relation to L2 learning, explain that:

...Having internalised the symbolic tools of the first language system, the second language learner has further opportunities to create yet more tools and new ways of meaning, through collaborative L2 activity. Applications of the ZPD to second learning assumes that new language knowledge is jointly constructed through collaborative activity, which may or may not involve formal instruction and metatalk. The new language is then appropriated and internalised by the learners, seen as active agents in their own development.

The socio-cultural perspective relates to the view of language as a tool used to perform a variety of functions. These uses are dependent upon the speakers and their social status, the message being conveyed and interpreted in a particular social and cultural context.

### **Approaches to teaching and learning modern languages in the United Kingdom**

Currently, there is not a single unified pedagogy for teaching modern languages in primary and secondary schools; however, the current models of instruction have emerged from a cognitivist perspective. At this moment, there is not a prescriptive curriculum about early modern languages learning or one to be followed by Teacher Training providers; however, although practice varies from school to school, and even from group to group in the same school, four modes of delivery modern languages have been identified. The description of these models follows the work of Driscoll & Frost (1999), Martin (2008), Mehisto *et al.* (2008), Jones & McLahlan, (2009), Hood & Tobutt (2009), Coyle, Hood & Marsh (2010), Pinter (2011), and Maynard (2012), as follows:

- (a) One of those models can be described as ‘incidental’, and aims to develop language awareness. The most typical example is the teacher calling out the class register and pupils responding in the target language. There are some schools that utilise this model to share and practise the home languages of the pupils in a class (Pinter, 2011).
- (b) Another model is referred to as ‘drip fed’, where the teacher presents some vocabulary in the target language, which is normally related to a topic or a theme that the class is studying. This model is associated with the thematic approach (Rowley & Cooper, 2009) where pupils study a topic in a cross-curricular context.
- (c) The third model is related to the discrete teaching of the target language, following a scheme of work where pupils are assessed either formally or informally (Hood & Tobutt, 2009). The form that this model of instruction follows is made up of three stages, usually known as Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP). Some schools only teach one modern language in Key Stage 2 (KS2), whereas others two or more; these normally depend on the links apparent with secondary schools.

- (d) The fourth model is known as ‘CLIL’ (content and language integrated learning), where a subject matter is taught through the medium of the target language. This model replicates the experience of immersion in the target language that pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL) undergo (Coyle *et al.*, 2010). Although this method is gaining in popularity and being actively promoted by Council of Europe (Eurydice, 2010), there remains a limited number of schools with the expertise and capacity to facilitate its use.

In these four models, the teacher plans lessons selecting vocabulary and grammatical structures, selecting tasks to enable learners to commit the newly acquired linguistic knowledge to memory so that they can use it in situations simulating real-life communicative exchanges. These approaches replicate the input-process-output sequence in order to gain L2 competence. Now we take a look at the teaching and learning theory in order to review the postulates on what constitutes approach, method, design, technique and approach as we believe these concepts are necessary to frame a strategy-based instruction.

### **Conceptualising approach, method, design, technique and procedure**

An organising principle for developing language courses is associated with approaches that describe the design and content of programmes, courses and materials aiming at selecting and sequencing lexis and grammar. This means that there is a two-fold aim in the notion of language approach as it encompasses the principles, values and beliefs of language and language learning (also referred to as philosophy of the language), as well as the practical principles emerging from that theoretical framework. This distinction has been crucial in the development of the understanding of a *teaching approach*, and has led Anthony (1963) to identify three hierarchical concepts: approach, method and procedure:

An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. An approach is axiomatic. It describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught. Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material (...) all of which is based upon the selected approach. An approach is axiomatic, a method is procedural. Within one approach, there can be many methods (...) a procedure is a set of techniques which makes the method operational (...) a technique is implementational—that which actually takes place in a classroom. (Anthony 1963, pp. 63–67).

Although the hierarchy of concepts is useful in terms of distinguishing different levels, this model does not cover the roles of the teacher, learners or instructional materials, and also requires elaboration. Other ways of conceptualising ‘approach’ have been presented, such as that of Mackey (1965), who focuses mainly on the levels of method and technique, and concentrates on the dimensions of selection, gradation, presentation and repetition.

Although a somewhat outdated source, Mackey still remains as one of the most authoritative characters in the field of L2 pedagogy. His concern was mainly centred on the analysis of textbooks and their organisation. The drawback of this model, however, is that it ignores the procedural level: for instance, the instructional techniques used at the level of the classroom.

The following discussion was introduced by Masouleh (2012), who explains that, although the question of how to teach languages has been debated for centuries, the conceptualisation of language teaching in terms of teaching methods has been under heated debate for the last century. Owing to the importance of Masouleh's views in terms of understanding the conceptualisation of method, the following concepts have been extracted from her article *From Method to Post Method: A Panacea!* (2012), through which the point is argued that, whilst some scholars consider the method as the cause of failure and success in language teaching, for others, little importance is assigned to methods. These are considered merely as instruments in the hands of teachers to provide opportunities for learners to acquire language (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006). Mackey (1950) also asserts, after centuries of language teaching, there is no systematic reference to the meaning of method. Much of the field of language method has become a matter of opinion rather than of fact (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006).

Friederike (2000, p. 617) explains:

[A] Method is a planned way of doing something. The original Greek word (μέθοδος) includes the idea of a series of steps leading towards a conceived goal. A method implies an orderly way of going about something, a certain degree of advance planning and of control, then; also, a process, rather than a product. Thus the term 'method' may describe both the procedures used by a teacher to instruct learners in a language lesson and the steps and techniques adopted by the learners themselves in pre-planned phases of self-teaching. A method always is a means towards something; it is not an end in itself.

Methods define language differently (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006). Mirhassani (2003) states that the meaning of the term depends on the method itself, as the concept means different things to different people. Masouleh (2012) suggests that, for some, it means a set of procedures; for others, the avoidance of certain teaching procedures. For some, it is the primacy of a language skill; for others, it is the type and the amount of vocabulary and structure. Different meanings of method can be inferred from the regulations on language teaching method issued by departments, Boards, and ministries of education. Friederike (2000, p. 617) states that 'more recent historical analysis (Howatt, 1984; Klippel, 1994; Musumeci, 1997) stresses the fact that methods are embedded in the political, cultural and educational values of their respective times and cannot be evaluated outside this context'.

Richards (1990) maintains that, for the development of method, there are two routes: one is through the syllabus and the other is through a theory of learning processes and instructional procedures. Another route to the development of some other methods is instructional theory. Methods based on an instructional theory are two-dimensional: (1) a psycholinguistic dimension, containing a theory of learning that describes learning strategies and processes and that specifies the conditions necessary for these processes to be effectively utilised by learners, and (2) a teaching dimension, containing an account of the teaching and learning procedures to be followed and of the role of teachers and learners in the instructional process. Richards (1990) insists that ‘methods have a life beyond the classroom’ (p. 13), and in his study, *The Secret Life of Methods*, he also states that:

The rise and fall of methods depends upon a variety of factors extrinsic to a method itself and often reflects the influence of fads and fashions, of profit-seekers and promoters, as well as the forces of the intellectual marketplace’ (1984, p. 13).

In his view, the fate of a method depends on the form in which the method is available to the learner (Richards, 1990).

Kumaravadivelu (2006) represents the best example of the voices against ‘method’, stating that ‘method has a magical hold on us; the obsession becomes stronger even after the so called demise of methods’ (p.322). Authors such as Brown & Rodgers (2002) make frequent references to the death of methods, using such expressions as ‘interred methods’ (p.10) and ‘the requiem of methods’ (p.11) whilst Akbari & Hosseini (2008) cited in Masouleh (2012, p. 69) indicate that:

For post-methodologists, the concept of method becomes a bogeyman for the following reasons: 1) methods can't be realized in their purest form in the classroom according to the principles of their originators; 2) methods are very limited and never applied universally. Methods never claim universality; 3) types of activities, teaching techniques used are pre-planned, better to say prescribed; and 4) the role of teacher is marginalised. The teacher submits herself or himself to the method. Through a process of marginalisation and self-marginalisation, teachers’ practical knowledge does not find the space and the scope to be regarded as visible, and consequently, fails to become part of the accepted knowledge of the discourse community.

Some scholars, such as Nunan (1991), consider the concept of method obsolete or of questionable value owing to its underlying assumption that a single set of principles determines whether or not learning takes place. Such critics, Friederike (2012) says, like to see the concept of method replaced with a range of options (Savignon, 1983; Stern, 1991) or as a set of guiding principles (Brown, 1994).

For the purpose of describing the strategy-based approach used for the purpose of this study, the model elaborated by Richards & Rogers (2010) has been used in the current study owing to the fact that the level of abstraction is considered more comprehensive than other reviewed models. Another reason for such a choice is based on the fact that Richards & Rodgers' theory views 'the levels of approach and method treated at the level of design, where objectives, syllabus, content as well as roles of the teacher, learners and instructional materials are specified' (p.20). These authors acknowledge that a method is defined by particular views about language (language as a system, as discourse, and as ideology), and that language learning (memory, personality traits, environment, and motivation) constitutes the approach. The approach, in turn, underpins the general as well as specific objectives of the method, providing a syllabus model, as well as various types of teaching and learning activity, whilst also prescribing the roles of the teacher, learners, and instructional materials. Finally, the approach is materialised in the 'procedure'.

### **Conceptualising the use of language learning strategies (LLS) as an approach to develop L2 knowledge**

Bearing in mind the theoretical linguistic and psychological postulates discussed thus far, it is necessary to question how such theories can influence the current initial teaching training model in place in courses such as the primary PGCE so as to provide future primary school teachers with a solid foundation for teaching a modern language.

The pedagogy for teaching languages in the primary context should not differ significantly from those of the core or foundation subjects; this is stated on the basis that the learning of another language should be encouraged in a natural environment similar to those where other school subjects take place (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). One of the advantages of mature language learners—and, in this particular case, a benefit for generalist primary PGCE students—is the amount of existing experiential knowledge already possessed in L1 and the role 'extension' plays in equipping them with the skills they need to respond effectively to new learning situations. Through the use of 'extension', students can recall different ways of approaching the learning of a new language, and can be taught to apply different types of cognitive skills developed previously as part of their innate speaking ability in their mother tongue. As noted earlier, deliberately choosing to apply such skills and techniques will be referred to as 'language-learning strategies'. Truman, cited in Hurd & Lewis (2008) uses strategies to encourage learners to self-correct in a distance learning setting. In this model, 'the teacher takes on the role of a tutor who facilitates a dynamic process which leads the learner to auto-monitor him/herself' (p. 262) through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

### **A strategy-based approach to learning another language: main tenets**

According to Marzban & Isazadeh (2012), the basic premise of the strategy-based approach is making L2 learners more aware of the strategies available for understanding



how to organise and use them systematically and effectively, and to transfer them to new language learning and contexts (Cohen, 2007). In the context of second-language acquisition (SLA) theory, there are two different types of learning and communication strategy, which can be taught explicitly or implicitly (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewener-Manzanares, Kupper & Russo, 1985; Wenden, 1987). Explicit learning strategy-instruction, as argued by Chamot (2004), primarily is concerned with development of 'students' awareness of the strategy utilised, teachers' modelling of strategic thinking, students' practice with new strategies, students' self-evaluation of the strategies used, and students' practice in transferring strategies to new tasks'. Oxford's model (1983), on the other hand, focuses on four areas, namely the use of checklists and/or interviews; the embedding of strategies within L2 learners pedagogy and subsequent implicit practice; the utilisation of various compensatory techniques to help students overcome their weaknesses instantly; and the introduction of various strategy textbooks as part of content-centred approach (Brown, 2007).

Ze-sheng (2008, p. 1) indicates that a strategy-based instruction is:

A learner-centred approach to teaching that has two major components: firstly, students are explicitly taught how, when, and why strategies can be used to facilitate language learning and language use tasks; secondly, strategies are integrated into everyday class materials, and may be explicitly or implicitly embedded into the language tasks. The first of these components has often stood alone as the approach when strategies are included in the language classroom.

The following stage focuses on integrating and embedding strategies within classroom language tasks. Chamot (2004) indicates that, in order for this to happen, teachers may start with a set of strategies upon which they wish to focus, and accordingly design activities to introduce and/or reinforce them, starting with the course materials established and then establishing which strategies might be inserted, or to otherwise spontaneously insert strategies into the lessons whenever it seems appropriate to do so (such as when striving to help students overcome problems with difficult materials or to speed-up the lesson). In all likelihood, teachers will be engaged in strategy-based instruction with an explicit focus on strategies only part of the time, whilst the rest of the time strategies will be implicitly embedded within the language tasks.

It has been suggested by Cohen & Macaro (2007) that learning strategy instruction may help learners in three ways: firstly, through helping students to become better learners; secondly, through assisting them to become independent and confident learners; and finally, through facilitating understanding of the relationship between their use of strategies and success in learning languages (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). In strategy-based instruction, students are expected to work independently and be responsible for their own learning. Learners are therefore challenged to manage their

language studies in a variety of ways. Students who have a repertoire of strategies at their disposal can make sophisticated learning decisions. In other words, strategy-based instruction aims to assist learners in becoming more responsible for their efforts in learning and using the target language. It also aims to assist them in becoming more effective learners by allowing them to individualize the language learning experience. According to Ze-sheng (2008, p. 1):

Strategy teaching does not require commercial materials, nor does it need to be a separate part of the curriculum; strategic instruction is a process that involves teaching students to read using procedures used by good readers, to write using approaches used by good writers, and to solve problems using techniques used by good problem solvers.

She goes on explain that:

[A] Strategy-based instruction includes the development of students' awareness of their strategies, teacher modelling of strategic thinking, identifying the strategies by name, providing opportunities for practice and self-evaluation. Teachers may conduct strategy-based instruction by starting with established course materials, then determining which strategies to insert and where; starting with a set of strategies they wish to focus on and design activities around them; or inserting strategies spontaneously into the lessons whenever it seems appropriate (for example, to help students overcome problems with difficult materials or to speed up the lesson), (p.4).

Bedir (2010) acknowledges that teacher belief is one of the vital factors involved in the effectiveness of learning strategies instruction. Teachers should believe that students—especially low-achieving ones—can be successful if they acquire appropriate strategies since strategies are not innate and can be taught and learnt. Teachers should also 'have confidence that the individual strategies are effective, and they must communicate this confidence to students' (Chamot 2004, p. 35).

### **Conceptualising a strategy-based approach for teaching and learning modern languages**

A strategy-based language teaching methodology was first adopted by Rubin (1975) and then followed by others, such as O'Malley & Chamot (1990), Oxford (2011), Cohen & Macaro (2007). These studies are concerned with the acquisition and automatic use of a particular set of behaviours to solve a linguistic task. All teaching models developing from the use of language learning strategies have been labelled under the title of 'strategy-based instruction' (SBI), and although there are variants, such as the competence-based approach, all teaching methods emerge from a common multi-disciplinary perspective in the realm of applied linguistics. These models take into account the theoretical aspects of developmental

psychology, such as age and relationships between L2 and strategy-development. The design of teaching method described in this work takes into consideration two main factors: prior linguistic knowledge, assuming that language strategies are transferrable from L1 to L2; and cognitive development in terms of maturation (age) and engagement. This means that the strategy-based method can be suited in order to introduce and develop L2 skills, irrespective of life experiences and age, in the hope that this can be used with both young learners and adults alike.

After reviewing different sources as outlined above, we believe that the SBI model would prove successful if it is re-cast and seen from the principles of cooperative learning where there is (a) the More Knowledgeable One (MKO) (this is the individual who has developed a greater degree of proficiency or skills) to scaffold learners' identification and use of: language learning strategies through the sensitive handling of errors, modelling strategies, and posing of comprehension questions; (b) learners' involvement in active listening, and experimenting with the language with other peers; and (c) learning materials through prompting the use of the target language in a meaningful manner, thus facilitating the use of LLS and helping the MKO in scaffolding learning.

Following the theoretical aspects of a teaching method, as discussed by Rogers (1951) and by Richards & Rodgers (2010), we could argue that the model of language learning strategies are closely aligned to the notion of *procedures*, as these are seen as part of classroom tasks. The way in which the teacher presents and uses the method relates to the *design* by means of which the teacher prepares particular tasks and selects resources to facilitate learning. Finally, the notion of *approach* in the explanation provided by Rogers (1951) and Richards & Rodgers (2010) refers to the nature of language learning using meta-cognitive skills in a process known as strategy-based instruction, which sees learning as depending upon strategic knowledge (Pintrich, 2002). We, therefore, can conclude that a strategy-based model of instruction is a method in its own right as its principles directly relate to the philosophical, pedagogical and linguistic tenets which have traditionally been used to discuss, analyse and evaluate teaching methods.

### **Chamot's strategy-based model**

Chamot's (2004) SBI model is made up of three major stages. Before the lesson, during the preparation stage, the teacher decides: (a) which strategies to use based on the needs of the group; (b) the type of practice opportunities to give the students; and (c) follow-up activities to consolidate learning. The teacher considers the needs of a teaching group in relation to the complexity of the task and their current ability and, on this basis, decides on the strategies to teach. Chamot believes that strategies can be taught. In the next stage, the teacher undertakes an initial presentation of the new strategy, or a combination of strategies, including a brief statement about why the strategy is important and how it is expected to assist students. Providing such information allows the learner to consider the new strategies in context. The teacher models the strategy using think-aloud protocols,

demonstrating the steps involved in approaching and completing the language task. Immediately after, the teacher moves to the practice stage. During this last stage, learners practice the new strategies in class, and are asked to reinforce learning through a piece of homework.

### **A revised strategy-based approach**

We use the structure adopted for modelling based on Chamot's (2004) method in terms of approach and design; however, we follow a different procedure, meaning that the group of concrete techniques, practices and behaviours employed differ from the original model.

Initially, it is necessary for trainees to trigger prior learning in L1 as the activation of this knowledge leads to new learning. The presentation stage comprises a short snappy task using an eye-catching format, or any other appealing format, followed by questions and answers to elicit information such as type of text, genre, and content. The resources used for the presentation stage are realia (this is language not simplified or edited to lead learners' understanding). General comprehension questions follow, where trainees are encouraged to support their answers by requesting an explanation of how they have worked out a given answer. The next stage consists of trainees working in pairs on a focused task. These tasks are very broad in scope as they are intended for general comprehension; for example, identification of content or lexical words. Through the application of think-aloud protocols, trainees decide on the strategies to use, and subsequently record them in a reflective journal.

Whereas in the case of Chamot's (2004) model the teacher identifies the strategies the learners are likely to use and proceeds to teach them, in this revised model, the identification and use of strategies emerge from the exploratory talk that takes place in a talk pair technique, during which trainees negotiate meaning and make their own decisions. In the case of oral work based on vocabulary development, if trainees need to establish how words are to be pronounced in the L2, they use an online translation engine to seek a model, practise the pronunciation either by repeating, chanting, singing or tapping the rhythm of the words to commit this to memory, and then assess one another, providing feedback. By analysing the immediate context of the words in the L2 text, the trainees work out meaning, which they then can reproduce by repeating the new words in context. At this stage, trainees have been working at the lexical (word) level, moving to phrases, and with sustained practice with their talk partner, to the sentence level, learning to produce whole new sentences in the target language.

During the practice stage, the roles of the learners change, and they take turns to become 'the more knowledgeable one', supporting one another and scaffolding their learning. This stage also provides many opportunities for self and peer-assessment. The final stage consists of formalising the learning that has taken place: trainees keep a record

of the strategies used in their reflective journal, marking the end of a cycle, which starts again the following lesson. Trainees are requested to show one another what they have been able to do with the language they have learnt, thus highlighting their achievement. This is a further distinction with Chamot's model (2004), where learning outcomes are not discussed. In our revised model, outcomes are used to celebrate trainees' achievements with the language, which at the same time, serves as a further motivational tool.

One of the key features of employing an SBI is the use of reflective skills both individually (metacognition) and as part of a small group (shared cognition). The trainees are requested to use their metacognitive skills and think about what language skills they already possessed, using peer exploratory talk in L1 to scaffold their learning. There are also opportunities for either member of the pair to take up the role of the 'more knowledgeable one' (MKO) to support the other member of the pair. This means that the role of the teacher, as the one and only source of knowledge, has decreased by the end of the lesson as trainees feel empowered and able to work on their own.

The following comparative chart (see Table 1), adapted from Moya (2014), provides a summary of the revised SBI model as designed for the purpose of this paper.

Table 1  
Comparative table: two models of a strategy-based approach.

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Chamot's Model (2004)</b>	<b>Revised Model</b>
One	The teacher decides: (a) which strategies to use based on the needs of the group, (b) the type of practice opportunities to give the students; and (c) follow-up activities.	The teacher presents a short snappy task using an eye-catching format, or any other appealing format, followed by questions and answers to elicit information, such as type of text, genre and content.
Two	The teacher considers the needs of the learners in relation to the learning tasks.	Learners work in pairs on a focused task assigned by the teacher (for example, identification of five nouns and adjectives). Using think-aloud protocols, learners decide on the strategies to use and then record them in their reflective journal.

Three	The teacher undertakes an initial presentation of the new strategy, or a combination of strategies, including a brief statement about why the strategy is important and how it is expected to assist students.	Learners decide how to approach the task and identify the language they require to complete the job successfully. For example, in case they need to know how to pronounce words, they use an online translation engine to seek a model, practice the model either by repeating, chanting, singing or tapping the rhythm of the words to commit the pronunciation to memory, and then assess one another, providing feedback.
Four	<p>The teacher models the strategy using think-aloud protocols, demonstrating the steps involved in approaching and completing the language task.</p> <p>The teacher plans for immediate practice.</p> <p>The students practice the new strategies in class and are asked to reinforce learning through a piece of homework.</p>	Participants keep a record of the strategies used in their reflective journal, and the process is then initiated again. Learners are requested to show one another what they are able to do with the language learnt, highlighting the learning outcomes (this is the knowledge, skills and understanding developed as a result of the learning process) in relation to the learning objectives (these are the aims of a lesson).

We have shown above how a revised SBI model can be used to support adult learners' development of another language. The main reasons for re-interpreting Chamot's approach respond to the needs of the context and the learners, which cannot be overlooked. We see adult learners as expert users of one language (this is their mother tongue) who, by virtue of their linguistic and personal experience, have developed a wide range of strategies and, consequently, they possess a rich repertoire of abilities which can be used to scaffold and regulate their own learning. Whilst we acknowledge that our re-interpretation is limited to a particular teaching setting, language learning strategies are ubiquitous to any learning experience and regardless of the methodology employed, learners use them actively all the time. As such, it might be a good idea to think about whether they can be taught inductively –in which case, we would be revisiting the pedagogical debate we presented on page 5 when reviewing the historical overview of the research in language learning strategies, or whether such strategies can be triggered by encouraging learners to be more reflective on their linguistic performance and have an ownership of their learning experience. In this paper, we have adhered to the latter view.

## Conclusion

We have referred to Chamot's (2004) SBI model and we have indicated that this is built upon the theoretical postulates of approach, method, design, procedures and techniques as explained by Richards & Rodgers (2010). Such framework provides the model with a sound theoretical underpinning. However, we consider that such a model is closely linked to a theory of learning that does not include the influence of contextual elements and, by reinterpreting it from a socio-cultural perspective, our revised model differs from Chamot's (2004) in regard to three main points: (a) it uses a different framework, diverting from the more cognitivist by incorporating reciprocal learning in the use of pair work in talking partners, where learners select and use the most appropriate strategies to scaffold learning; (b) it gives learners greater autonomy for them to be able to self-regulate their own learning; and (c) it emphasises the outcomes of a learning task by highlighting what the learners can do with the language they have just learnt so as to maintain motivation. The variations we have introduced to the original SBI approach relates more closely to cooperative learning where each learner is responsible, not only for their own learning, but also for the learning of the other member in a community of practice. In contrast to more traditional approaches which disregard the use of L1 when learning an L2, we believe that the use of the mother tongue is essential to provide opportunities for adult learners to self-regulate their learning and develop their cognitive skills which are necessary to foster shared cognition.

When approaching the learning of a new language, students bring their own linguistic expertise in L1 and they can use their experiences as a catalogue of strategies to respond appropriately to different communicative demands. This view empowers learners as it is up to them to decide which strategies to use, where and when; it sees learners actively engaged in the co-construction of knowledge whilst it gives them the control over their learning experiences, which in turn has an effect on motivational issues.

Whilst this paper has considered some of the theoretical postulates that support the design of a revised SBI model, we believe that in order to gauge the success of such a model, further research is needed in order to document learning outcomes. Nonetheless, our aim in this paper has been to contribute to the debate (and incidentally provide an alternative model) on how to make the teaching and learning of modern languages appealing, relevant and meaningful in a context where English leaves very little scope to develop students' interest and engagement in other languages.

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