

**Proposal Information of Contribution 1708****ID: 1708****27. Didactics - Learning and Teaching***Format of Presentation: Paper**Alternative EERA Network: 31. Language and Education Network**Keywords: Learning strategies; strategy use; strategy support; foreign language; secondary education***Foreign Language Learning Strategies: Learner Strategy Use and Teacher Strategy Support****Katerina Vlckova, Karolina Peskova, Katerina Svejdikova**

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*Presenting Author: Vlckova, Katerina; Peskova, Karolina***Annotation**

Supporting pupils in learning to learn is a condition for responsible teaching as well as sustainable learning. Relationship between support of learning strategies by teachers and strategy use by learners was investigated by quasi-standardised foreign language learning strategy inventories at lower and upper secondary level in the Czech Republic. Strategies were classified on the basis of four language skills and psychological functions of strategies in information processing. The results showed that teachers support strategies more than pupils use them. The most supported were reading strategies and the most used were translation strategies. Learners differed in strategy use based on different teachers. Further results from this research are expected to enrich our current knowledge about strategies in connection to language skills and teacher support of strategies in the school conditions.

**Introduction**

Supporting pupils in *learning to learn* is a key part and condition for both, *responsible teaching* as well as *sustainable* (i. e. lifelong learning) *learning*. Relationship between support of learning strategies by teachers and strategy use by learners is a basic question of theory and research in *second language acquisition* (SLA) and instruction (see Mandl, & Friedrich, 1992, 2006). Most of the researches in the field use (quasi)experiments to show the effectiveness of direct or indirect, explicit or implicit, short or long-term strategy instruction or task-based approach oriented on single or groups of strategies.

The concept of *foreign language learning strategies* (FLLS) nowadays captures a wide range of linguistic behaviours in the SLA. Strategies are mostly defined as sets of potentially "conscious thoughts and actions that learner take to achieve a learning goal" (Chamot, 2004). There are different criteria for classifying learning strategies. In our research we combined two main approaches, i. e. *classification of strategies* on the basis of four *language skills* (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and two means (vocabulary, translation) by Cohen and Weaver (2006); and classification based on function of strategies in the *information processing* (cognitive – including compensatory strategies, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies) by O'Malley & Chamot (1990) or Oxford (1990).

Our research questions were: Is there a statistically significant congruence among *strategy use by learners* and *strategy support by teacher*? What does the congruence look like? Can we confirm dependence of strategy use (at levels of single strategies and groups) on teacher?

More detailed and new results of further analyses will be presented and will focus on the questions: What strategies do pupils use and teacher don't support? What strategies do teacher report to support and pupils don't use? What strategies are used as well as supported? And what strategies are neither used nor supported? What do the results look like when we use the classification of strategies based on the information processing?

Our research seeks the answers for these research questions by the means of teacher and learner on-line strategy inventories which were included in a national school self-evaluation project. Pupils, teachers and schools were provided their results.

*Methodology, Methods, Research Instruments or Sources Used*

We adopted (Vlckova, & Prikylova, 2011) the Young Learners Language Strategy Use Survey (Cohen & Oxford, 2002) and standardized it for lower secondary level of education in the Czech Republic. The inventory consists of 64 items on a dichotomous scale (yes – no). The teacher strategy support inventory ( $\alpha = .88$ ) is equivalent to the pupils inventory ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

For the upper secondary level we adopted and standardised (Vlckova, & Prikylova, 2011) the Language Strategy Use Survey (Cohen, Oxford, & Chi, 2002). The inventory consists of 89 items on the 4-point scale from yes (4) – rather yes – rather no – no (1). Again the teacher inventory ( $\alpha = .97$ ) was equivalent regarding the items to the students inventory ( $\alpha = .97$ ), we just shifted the point of view from using strategies to supporting them.

Research sample (non-random sampling) comprised of 2 groups with different above mentioned inventories:

(1) 776 pupils of 4th to 9th grade in 41 language classes (27 English, 11 German) and their 23 teachers at 18 elementary schools (i. e. lower secondary level). 92 % of classes were taught by a woman teacher.

(2) 940 students of 50 teachers of upper secondary comprehensive, technical or vocational schools. 82 % of students reported English learning strategies.

Statistical data analysis is based on techniques focusing on relation and differences, such as correlations and ANOVA.

**Results**

Teachers reported higher strategy support than pupils reported their strategy use. At the lower secondary level the most supported were reading strategies (80 %). The least supported were speaking strategies (64 %). Pupils used the most (> 60%) translation and listening strategies, the least used were writing strategies and vocabulary strategies (around 45 %). The results at upper secondary level were partly similar. The most supported were reading strategies ( $x = 3.30$ ,  $SD = .47$ ) and writing strategies ( $x = 3.29$ ,  $SD = .39$ ), the least supported were translation strategies ( $x = 2.94$ ,  $SD = .43$ ). The most used were translation strategies ( $x = 2.78$ ,  $SD = .56$ ), the least used were vocabulary strategies ( $x = 2.44$ ,  $SD = .51$ ). The biggest gap between strategy use and strategy support was in vocabulary strategies. Younger learners used more strategies than older learners, and learners differed in strategy use based on different teachers.

*Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings*

Looking at the results, we have to take into account that they present self-report data which might be biased. Nevertheless they allow us to see basic tendencies teachers and pupils apply when teaching and learning foreign language. The similarity of data from two educational levels supports the practical significance of the results. Younger learners might report higher strategy use because they have access only to lower level of language competence therefore they need to use more strategies to compensate. Larger use of speaking strategies is typical for natural settings therefore the teachers might support them the least. Furthermore, the FL is not so often used in Czech classes as teachers and pupils tend to keep switching to mother language. From the point of possible intervention into competency to learn, it is encouraging that the results show that the teacher has a positive influence on pupils' strategy use (Vlckova, 2010). The biggest ineffectiveness was found in the use and support of vocabulary strategies. Czech pupils generally use low number of different memory strategies to learn vocabulary (Vlckova, 2010). Generally speaking, groups of supported strategies by teachers were used by pupils. These results bring more complete information for the theory, mainly about different strategy groups and their connection to strategy use and support. The contribution of our research is therefore providing this type of results of such general level that were not available from the East European countries before.

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