FOCUS ON THE LEARNER*

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A recurring educational concern in recent years has been how the curriculum can be made to reflect the needs, concerns and resources of learners. This is an acknowledgement that learners have the right to help decide the kinds of educational services they get, and that information about learners can potentially improve the effectiveness of both teaching and learning. The resulting movement towards learner-centred methodologies and instructional designs is seen, for example, in the use of learners as planners and monitors of their own learning in contemporary teaching methods, and in attempts to incorporate into teaching, insights obtained from studies of how second language learners develop language proficiency. The present paper continues this exploration of ways in which curriculum development and methodology in teaching English as a second language can take account of learners, and examines how teachers and researchers can collaborate in the process of developing a learner-centred curriculum.

This paper is prompted by the fact that despite the increased sensitivity to learner needs and to the learner's participation in the learning process seen in contemporary

discussions of language teaching, there is a still a sense in which our educational philosophy and practice reflects a top-down approach to teaching. Typically, the learner is approached on the terms of the applied linguist, educational theorist, curriculum planner or teacher. Hence development of a teaching approach or method generally starts from the applied linguist's or methodologist's theory of second language acquisition. This in turn provides the starting point for the elaboration of a teaching method which is subsequently imposed on the learner. The learner enters into our deliberations incidentally as a consumer. I will illustrate this claim here by examining current practices in teaching English as a second language which relate to how the goals and content of a language program are determined as well as how teaching procedures are selected. Alternative possibilities will be considered through examining some of the kinds of information about learners that can contribute to curriculum planning, and how such information can be obtained and used. Two sources of information about learners will be examined: information about learner needs, and information about learning strategies.

1. What do learners need to learn: learning to use language, or using language to learn?

     Few would question the assumption that if our ESL programs are to serve our students they should focus on our learners' needs. Needs analysis is no longer an unfamiliar term in the field of language teaching. There is now a fairly general recognition that instructional objectives should reflect the
ultimate purposes for which the learner will use English, and that these purposes can be identified through needs analysis (Bagshaw and Brindley 1984). The work of Richterich (1972, 1975), Munby (1978), and the Council of Europe (van Ek 1975), paved the way in developing procedures for systematically investigating learner needs and using the information obtained in developing the objectives and syllabus for a language program.

An assumption underlying many attempts to use needs analysis to arrive at a specification of what it is we should focus on in teaching is that needs analysis procedures will enable us to specify more accurately the kinds of language the learners need. The results are generally expressed as basic units of language, mastery of which will result in linguistic and communicative competence. For example, the New York State Core Curriculum for English as a Second Language in the Secondary Schools (University of the State of New York 1983) sets out to specify the language content needed for "limited English proficient students [to] attain communicative and linguistic competence". The curriculum lists goals for Listening and Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Culture across four levels of instruction and specifies listening and speaking skills, grammatical structures, vocabulary, reading skills, writing skills, and cultural topics for each level.

This kind of approach to developing an ESL curriculum is an obvious and reasonable one, and is intended to provide a basis for learning in the content areas. The focus of the curriculum can be summarized as learning to use language. This reflects a prevailing philosophy underlying many ESL programs in which fluency or skill in using English is regarded as the basis for
Let us refer to this as a language-skill approach. The characteristics of a language-skill approach are:

(a) learner needs are defined in terms of language and language skills;
(b) there is a focus on linguistic or communicative competence;
(c) language mastery is seen as the key to content learning and to academic achievement;
(d) there is a separation of language learning from content learning.

According to this approach, in order to succeed in the regular school system, what the ESL learner needs is further instruction in English.

Lack of English proficiency is the major reason for language minority students' academic failure.... However, when students have become proficient in English, then they can be exited to an all-English program, since limited English proficiency will no longer impede their academic progress.

Cited in Cummins 1981.4

Despite the intuitive logic of this approach, there is a growing concern that a language-skill approach reflects only part of the learners' total needs. If an ESL program is designed to prepare students to participate in the regular school curriculum, it is necessary to examine more closely the relationship between language skill and academic achievement. Researchers have recently begun to explore this issue. Cummins (1981), for example, has explored the relationship between language
proficiency and academic and cognitive development. The focus of Cummins' work has been on the nature of learning in school contexts. He observes that the skills needed to attain the kind of communicative competence needed for social interaction in the school are not the same as those needed for academic success, and attributes this to differences in the cognitive demands of social-interactional and academic tasks. He distinguishes between two contexts for language use. Social interactional uses of language, such as face-to-face conversation, are regarded as "context-embedded", since they are supported by the situation, paralinguistic cues, and allow for negotiation and feedback. Many academic tasks, however, such as reading or attending a lecture, are regarded as "context-reduced", since the learner is forced to rely primarily on linguistic cues to meaning.

Cummins argues that academic success is dependent upon the ability to use language in context-reduced situations, whereas many ESL programs focus primarily on using language in context embedded settings. One consequence is that a learner may appear to be fluent in English but have difficulty coping with academic demands. A common conclusion is that, because the minority student is apparently fluent in English, poor academic performance cannot be attributed to lack of proficiency in English. Learning difficulties are consequently attributed to deficient cognitive abilities or to a lack of motivation.

The work of Brown, Anderson, Shillock and Yule (1984) offers a complementary perspective on the nature of classroom discourse and the relationship between discourse management skills and
classroom learning. They examined the oral language skills of native speakers of English in Scottish classrooms, and found that many native speakers lack the ability to use oral language effectively as a basis for classroom learning. Many students, while fluent in the interactional uses of language, lacked control of the discourse skills needed to communicate information effectively. They had difficulty performing tasks which required the coherent organization and presentation of specific information, tasks which the authors argue are basic to school achievement across the curriculum.

Saville-Troike (1984) has also examined how language proficiency and academic achievement are related. She found that ESL students' academic achievement in the content areas was not a factor of their English proficiency. Performance on language tests did not predict performance on content-based tests nor did accuracy in English morphology and syntax in spoken language affect academic performance. Among the conclusions she draws are:

1. Vocabulary knowledge in English is the most important aspect of oral English proficiency for academic achievement. Vocabulary taught in ESL should therefore be related as closely as possible to students' learning needs in their subject matter classes.

2. The portions of ESL lessons which focus on structural patterns, especially on English morphology, appear to make little contribution towards meeting students' immediate academic needs.

Saville-Troike 1984.216
Saville-Troike concludes that ESL programs have too often taught English as an end in itself rather than as a means to an end. Researchers too have often focussed on how learners learn English rather than on how learners learn to use English as a tool for learning (cf Richards 1985). This conclusion should not be suprising because, when we examine ESL curriculum and materials based on the language-skill approach, we see that language is often taught as an end in itself rather than as a means to learning. Such curriculi short-change our learners because they fail to focus on the kinds of learning students encounter in regular classes. As Mohan remarks,

Any educational approach that considers language learning alone and ignores the learning of subject matter is inadequate to the needs of these learners. .... What is needed is an integrative approach which relates language learning and content learning, considers language as a medium of learning, and acknowledges the role of context in communication.

Mohan 1985: 1

The focus of such a curriculum is on using language to learn, rather than learning to use language. I have referred elsewhere (Richards 1985) to this kind of a curriculum as a proficiency-based curriculum, one in which language learning is subordinated to the kinds of purposes for which the learner needs to use language in the real world. In the case of an ESL program designed to help learners enter the regular school system, the focus is on the kinds of cognitive and instructional tasks and
activities learners encounter in their content classes. The characteristics of a proficiency-based approach in teaching ESL at the elementary or secondary level are:

(a) learner needs are defined in terms of tasks and activities which characterize learning in the content areas;
(b) language learning is viewed in terms of proficiency, that is, as the skills needed to use language for different kinds of educational purposes;
(c) there is an integration of language learning and content learning.

The starting point for the development of a proficiency-based ESL curriculum at the secondary level is analysis of the form and content of learning and teaching across the curriculum. To carry out such a needs analysis, a collaborative effort is required, one which involves ESL teachers, content subject teachers, and ESL learners. Let us consider how this can be accomplished.

Goals: The goal of needs analysis in a proficiency-based curriculum is to identify the nature of teaching and learning in the content areas by identifying the tasks and activities learners need to accomplish and the skills these tasks demand. The focus is hence on the kinds of content and the kinds of learning activities encountered within different subject areas across the curriculum, as well as the cognitive, linguistic, and instructional demands of these tasks and activities.

Procedures. The difficulties involved in identifying learner needs in the content areas should not be underestimated. Needs
analysis will be easier in situations where a prescribed core curriculum is followed than in situations where learners may select courses from a broad range of electives. In the latter case, less specific information generalizable across content areas is the focus for data collection. A variety of procedures can be employed in carrying out a needs analysis. These include;
(a) literature surveys: a considerable literature exists on language and learning across the curriculum. For example Herber (1978) identifies reading skills across content areas; Dupuis (1984) surveys reading skills in specific content areas; Mohan (1986) identifies cognitive schemata which cross content areas;
(b) interviews with content teachers: teachers can be interviewed to determine what it is that they perceive as being the essential concepts and cognitive skills learners need to master for success in their subject areas, to determine their perceptions of problems faced by ESL students in their classes, and to obtain information on the typical teaching style they adopt in their classes;
(c) interviews with learners: learners who have completed ESL instruction and who are at different stages within the regular school curriculum can be interviewed to determine their perceptions of difficulties in different content subjects;
(e) content analysis of textbooks: analysis of textbooks provides a basis of assessing the conceptual and linguistic content of textbooks and the conceptual and learning schemata they assume;
(f) analysis of curriculum and class assignments;
(g) analysis of tests and test protocols;
(h) classroom observation: Saville-Troike (1984) reports that two kinds of pedagogic activities were observed in content classes which posed special problems for ESL learners. These were the "teacher-to-whole-class-participant-structure" where the class was talked or read to as a whole, and the "fully independent participant structure" where students were given written or oral instructions to carry out without additional interaction with adults or peers;

(i) case studies: longitudinal studies of high achievers and low achievers can be used to build up profiles of different categories of learners;

(j) consultations with experts in language across the curriculum: Applications. Procedures of this kind generate different kinds of data, some of it impressionistic and subjective, some of it objective and quantifiable, but all of it potentially usable in developing or evaluating an ESL curriculum designed to prepare students for regular secondary school classes. Analysis of the information obtained helps us to identify the content and skills underlying achievement in the content areas and to develop an approach towards preparing ESL learners for these skills and content. It also enables us to evaluate the goals and objectives our ESL curriculum is working towards.

Examples. A good example of an approach to developing an ESL curriculum which focusses on "learning through English" rather than on "learning English" is given in Mohan (1986). He presents an organizing framework for teaching language across the curriculum which consists of the following processes:

1. Develop an organizing framework of language and
thinking skills across the curriculum....

2. Improve communication of subject matter....

3. Find strategies for developing the language skills in this general framework....

4. Find strategies for developing the thinking skills in this general framework.

Pedagogic strategies discussed by Mohan are based on the concept of an "activity". This centres on a topic and the elaboration of a sequence of activities around that topic which involves both practical and theoretical knowledge. He illustrates how topics drawn from the content areas can be used as the basis for classroom activities which are designed to integrate language learning with subject matter learning and to clarify comprehension of subject matter.

The work of Tikunoff (1985) in the field of bilingual education provides another example of how content teaching and language teaching can be integrated. He characterizes a student who can participate effectively in classroom instruction in English as Functionally Proficient. He describes three components of student functional proficiency (1985:4);

Participative competence - the ability to respond appropriately to the demands of class tasks and to the procedural rules for accomplishing them;

Interactional competence - the ability to respond appropriately to the classroom rules of discourse and social rules of discourse, interacting appropriately with both peers and adults while accomplishing class tasks;
Academic competence - the ability to acquire new skills, assimilate new information, and construct new concepts.

Tikunoff argues that the goal of teaching for LEP students should be to develop these competencies in learners, and he discusses a number of possible strategies and procedures.

Brown, Anderson, Shillock and Yule (1984) present a detailed rationale for a different approach to developing the oral language skills needed for classroom learning. They present a taxonomy of graded tasks which can be used to develop information-related uses of language. By tasks they refer to information gap activities in which learners work in pairs, one learner using information at his or her disposal in order to communicate it to a partner who must use the information for a specific purpose. Such tasks include:

- assemble an instrument
- complete a pattern or diagram
- follow a route on a map
- arrange a set of objects in a particular configuration

Tasks are classified according to the cognitive and linguistic demands they make and are used as a basis for regular supplementary oral activities.

Several approaches have hence been proposed as a basis for developing pedagogic strategies which link content learning and language learning. A concerted effort is now needed to fill out the practical consequences of these approaches and to collect information on their effectiveness in different learning contexts.
2. How do learners need to learn: applying methods to learners or developing methodology from learners?

An ESL curriculum which focuses on "using language to learn" implies a different approach to needs analysis from one which is built around "learning to use language". It leads to the articulation of different program goals and a different approach to the determination of what to include in the curriculum. Whereas the discussion above has focussed primarily on issues which determine the content of the curriculum, we now consider how learners can be involved in the process by which we determine teaching procedures and strategies. The focus here is on learner strategies, and the role the study of learner strategies can play in developing classroom methodology. But first, let us consider the assumptions underlying many current teaching practices.

A methodology, or method, in language teaching consists of a set of techniques for the presentation, practice and testing of language skills, which is derived from a particular theory of the nature of language proficiency and from a particular instructional design derived from these theoretical assumptions (Richards and Rodgers 1982). Thus the teacher's classroom techniques reflect the philosophy underlying the method he or she subscribes to (in theory, at least). A teacher who follows a Communicative Methodology for example, will tend to use fluency-based interactive speaking activities, perhaps using pair work and task-based activities involving an "information-gap". A Natural Approach teacher will provide activities that require
meaningful comprehension and which allow for speaking to develop gradually. A Silent Way teacher will insist on correct pronunciation and grammar and will use a variety of objects and charts to elicit production, whereas a teacher using Total Physical Response will delay the need to speak and concentrate initially on action-based activities which require physical but often non-verbal responses from learners (Richards and Rodgers 1986).

In each of these examples we note that methodology is an application of a specific instructional design and instructional philosophy. Theory governs practice. The learner enters into consideration as an aspect of the delivery system, the recipient of an educational technology that is the application of a personal educational philosophy or a particular linguistic or psycholinguistic theory. Even in so-called learner-centred or humanistic approaches, it is the teacher's philosophy of learning and teaching that dominates, and learners are expected to immerse themselves in it unquestioningly. This is what I meant earlier by a "top-down approach" to teaching.

In recent years, educators are turning to an alternative source of wisdom in developing teaching methods, namely, the learners themselves. Prompted by the awareness that learners may succeed despite our methods and techniques rather than because of them, researchers are looking more closely at learners in an attempt to discover how successful learners achieve their results. Wenden comments,

from this viewpoint, the learner is seen as an "active,
self-determining individual who processes information in complex, often idiosyncratic ways that rarely can be predicted entirely in advance...(Weinstein et al 1979). The purpose of the research, therefore, is to discover what "active, self-determining" learners do to help themselves learn a second language.

Wenden 1985. 4.

Studies of learner strategies have focussed on the variety of operations, processes, procedures and heuristics which learners apply to the task of learning a second language. Rubin (1975) distinguished between strategies that directly affect learning, such as self-monitoring, memorization, or practice, and those which contribute indirectly to learning, such as seeking out opportunities to talk to native-speakers, thus getting an increased exposure to the target language. These strategies may be both conscious and unconscious (Bialystock 1985). Some characterize the learner's "set", or approach towards second language learning in general, while others apply to particular kinds of language learning problems. In the former category are accounts of strategies employed by successful language learners, in which specific strategies have been identified on the basis of interviews and observations of good language learners (Stern 1975: Naiman et al 1975; Rubin 1975). Jones (cited in Willing 1985) summarizes the strategies attributed to successful language learners in these studies;

1. Valuing: the good language learner values the culture, the language and its speakers.

2. Planning: the good language learner thinks about his/her language needs and how best to fulfill them.
3. **Evaluating**: the good language learner thinks about how well s/he is learning the language and what could be done to improve the learning process.

4. **Monitoring**: the good language learner monitors all facets of his/her, and other's language.

5. **Internalizing**: the good language learner thinks about what is being learnt, and incorporates it into a developing system.

6. **Hypothesising**: the good language learner considers possible manifestations of the language, tests these hypotheses and makes subsequent manifestations accordingly.

7. **Rehearsing**: the good language learner rehearses his/her speech when preparing for an interchange.

8. **Communicating**: the good language learner actively looks for opportunities to communicate.

9. **Persisting**: the good language learner tries again, if necessary in other ways, when there has been a communication breakdown.

10. **Risk-taking**: the good language learner is willing to make mistakes, or to appear foolish in order to communicate.

11. **Practising**: the good language learner practises.

12. **Inferencing**: the good language learner is a far-ranging and accurate guesser.

13. **Attending to Meaning**: the good language learner searches for meaning.

14. **Attending to Form**: the good language learner pays attention to the patterns in the language that express the meanings.

15. **Absorbing**: the good language learner immerses him/herself in the language.

Information of this kind is useful in broadening our understanding of the nature of successful second language learning, and can be used as a basis for developing activities designed to improve the learner's awareness and control of his or
her own learning style (e.g. see Willing 1985). However in order to provide information that can be applied directly to teaching, it needs to be complemented by studies of the strategies successful learners apply to learning within the school context and in relation to specific learning tasks. From this perspective, the kinds of questions that can be addressed are:

What note-taking strategies do effective listeners employ during lectures?

What underlining techniques do efficient readers make use of when reading textbooks?

What information-gathering procedures do students employ who score consistently well on social studies assignments?

How do good readers handle difficult reading assignments, and how do their strategies differ from those used by less effective readers?

What writing processes do skilled writers employ?

What test-taking strategies do successful students employ?

Answers to such questions provide information that can directly inform our teaching methodology. Let us now explore some of the ways in which such information can be obtained and the uses that can be made of it.

Goals. The goal of studies of how learners approach classroom learning tasks is to characterize the processes and strategies employed by skilled and unskilled learners. A further goal may be to determine the learner's perception of the nature and value of specific kinds of instructional activities. O'Malley et.al suggest

Empirical information is needed on how learning strategies are perceived by second language students, the strategies
or strategy combinations used for specific language tasks both within and beyond the classroom, and the strategies used by beginning- and intermediate-level second language students. And finally, empirical data are needed on the extent to which strategies taught in natural, as opposed to laboratory, instructional settings are used by students and influence second language learning for a variety of language tasks.

O'Malley et.al 1985 652.

**Procedures.** As with the approach to need analysis reviewed above, the combined efforts of teachers, learners, and researchers are involved in developing profiles of learner strategies. Both direct and indirect measures may have to be employed, since learner strategies may be conscious and unconscious, observable and unobservable. Teachers and researchers have developed a number of approaches to gathering these kinds of data. These include:

(a) interviews: learners are interviewed after completion of a task to see if they can recall the strategies they employed to complete it; teachers may be interviewed to obtain information on strategies they observe learners using.

(b) questionnaires: learners may be given a questionnaire which lists different kinds of strategies, and asked to indicate which ones they would choose in order to accomplish particular learning tasks.

(c) talk-aloud studies: learners can be trained to verbalize
their thought processes into a microphone while completing a task. For example a learner may verbalize his or her thoughts and mental heuristics whenever a difficult section of a reading passage is encountered.

(d) observation: students may be observed while performing tasks in classroom or laboratory settings. For example a video recording of a student completing a reading or writing task may be made in which information concerning eye movements, pausing, and revisions is recorded for later analysis. The learner may be subsequently interviewed as the video is viewed and asked to account for what occured.

Applications.
Information obtained from such studies can be used to develop more effective strategies for both teachers and learners. Learners who employ inefficient strategies can be trained to replace them with more effective ones. Wenden (1985:7), for example, notes that

Training studies conducted with learning-disabled children has further demonstrated the importance of knowing about and using strategies. Once appropriately trained, these children have been able to use strategies to raise their level of performance to that of untrained but normal learning adults in performing certain academic tasks.

Likewise O'Malley et.al report

Findings ....[in cognitive psychology] generally indicate that strategy training is effective in improving the performance of students on a wide range of reading and problem-solving tasks.
Examples.

An increasing number of studies are available to demonstrate the practical usefulness of research on learner strategies. Studies of how learners approach reading tasks, for example, have provided information on strategies employed by good and poor readers. Phillips (1975) employed a "think-aloud" procedure to investigate reader's strategies in dealing with unknown vocabulary. From her students' descriptions Phillips found that strategies used by efficient readers included categorizing words grammatically, interpreting grammatical operations, and recognizing cognates and root words. Hosenfeld (1977, 1984) has used similar techniques in studying processes employed by L2 readers when encountering unfamiliar words. In one study (Hosenfeld 1977), some of the differences between those with high and low scores on a reading proficiency test were: high scorers tended to keep the meaning of the passage in mind, read in broad phrases, skip inessential words, and guess meanings of unknown words from context; low scorers tended to lose the meaning of sentences as soon as they decoded them, read word-by-word or in short phrases, rarely skip words and turn to the glossary when they encountered new words. In addition successful readers tended to identify the grammatical categories of words, could detect word order differences in the foreign language, recognized cognates, and used the glossary only as a last resort (Hosenfeld 1984:233). Hosenfeld found that unsuccessful readers could be taught the lexical strategies of successful readers, confirming
Wenden's observation that "...ineffective learners are inactive learners. Their apparent inability to learn, is in fact, due to their not having an appropriate repertoire of learning strategies" (ibid 7).

Studies of how learners approach writing tasks have also focussed on the effectiveness of the processes learners employ (Raimes 1985). Lapp (1984) summarizes some of the research findings on differences between skilled and unskilled writers with respect to rehearsing and pre-writing behaviors (what a writer does prior to beginning writing), drafting and writing processes (how the writer actually composes his or her piece of writing) and revising behaviors (revisions and corrections the writer makes):

1. **Rehearsing and pre-writing behaviors.**

   **Skilled writers.**
   
   Spend time thinking about the task and planning how they will approach it; gather and organize information; Have a variety of different strategies to help them, e.g. notetaking, reading, making lists.

   **Unskilled writers.**
   
   Spend little time on planning. May start off confused about the task. Have few planning and organizing strategies available.

2. **Drafting and writing behaviors.**

   **Skilled writers.**
   
   Use information and ideas derived from rehearsing to trigger writing. Take time to let ideas develop. Get ideas onto paper quickly and fluently. Have sufficient language resources available (e.g. grammar, vocabulary) to enable them to concentrate on meaning rather than form. Spend time reviewing what they write, to allow for what they have
written to trigger new ideas.
Do most of their reviewing at the sentence or paragraph level.
Know how to use reviewing to solve composing problems.
Use reviewing to trigger planning.
Refer back to rehearsing data to to maintain focus and to trigger
further writing.
Are primarily concerned with higher levels of meaning.

Unskilled writers.

Begin the task immediately.
Refer to the task or topic to trigger writing.
Have limited language resources available and therefore quickly
become concerned with language matters.
Spend little time reviewing what they have produced.
Review only short segments of text.
Don't use reviewing to solve composing problems.
Do not have access to rehearsing data.
Concerned primarily with vocabulary choice and sentence
formation.

3. Revising Behaviors.

Skilled writers.

Make fewer formal changes at the surface level.
Use revisions successfully to clarify meanings.
Make effective revisions which change the direction and focus of
the text.
Revise at all levels (lexical, sentence, discourse).
Add, delete, substitute and reorder when revising.
Review and revise throughout the composing process.
Often pause for reviewing and revising during rewriting the first
draft.
Revising does not interfere with the progress, direction and
control of the writing process.
Is not bothered by temporary confusions arising during the
revising process.
Uses revision process to generate new content and trigger need
for further revision.

Unskilled writers.

Make many formal changes at the surface level.
Revisions do not always clarify meanings.
Do not make major revisions in the direction or focus of the
text.
Revise primarily at lexical and sentence level.
Do not make effective use of additions, deletions,
substitutions, and reorderings.
Make most revisions only during writing the first draft.
Do not pause for reviewing while copying the first draft.
Revising interferes with the composing process.
Bothered by the confusion associated with revising thus reducing
the desire to revise.
Uses revision process primarily to correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary.
Lapp 1984

While many of the studies these findings are based on deal with first language writers, similar findings with respect to L2 writers (e.g. Heuring 1984) are compelling teachers to evaluate their teaching strategies to determine if they are promoting effective or ineffective learning strategies in learners. Many commonly employed techniques in the teaching of writing, such as outlining or writing from a rhetorical model, might well inhibit rather than encourage the development of effective writing skills, because they direct the learner's attention to the form and mechanics of writing too early in the writing process.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I have examined two ways of looking at learners' needs, one in terms of the skills learners need to master in order to cope with the demands of instruction through another language, and the other in terms of the strategies learner's need to acquire to become more effective managers of their own learning. I have suggested that as language teachers, we tend to be over-concerned with the language component of learning, viewing language learning as an end in itself rather than as a means to an end. Our teaching methods tend to be informed by theory rather than by observation of how learners learn. The teacher's responsibility is not to make his or her teaching more closely reflect the Method of the day or the second language acquisition theory of the season. Theories of teaching and learning that are
relevant to the classroom must account for the nature of teaching and learning in the school setting. The teacher's responsibility is to become a more effective manager of classroom learning. In order to accomplish this, both teachers and researchers must collectively negotiate an agenda for research that focusses on what learners need to learn as a basis for academic achievement and the kinds of strategies that they can apply to this learning.

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