

# Foreign language learning strategies use and support in upper secondary level schools in the Czech Republic – further results

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## Introduction

Learning strategies are a part of learning any subject, including foreign languages. Currently, foreign language learning strategies are researched for example by Oxford (1990), Chamot and O'Malley (1990) and Cohen (2006).

## Research aims

The aim of our research (Miková & Přírková, 2010) was to measure pupil use of foreign language learning strategies, the declared support of strategy use by teachers and the relationship between these two. We were interested in whether:
 

- the more the teacher supports pupils' indirect foreign language learning strategies, the more the pupils use them.
- the more the teacher supports pupils' foreign learning strategies according to Oxford's 4 groups of strategies, the more the pupils use them.

## Method

**Instrument** Language Strategy Use Survey (2002)  
**The tool's authors** Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2002)  
**Concept based** Style and Strategies-Based Instruction (SSBI) of Cohen and Weaver (2006)  
**FLS Typology** Cohen, Oxford, Chi (2002):  
 - Listening strategy use  
 - Vocabulary strategy  
 - Speaking strategy use  
 - Reading strategy use  
 - Writing strategy use  
 - Translation strategy use

**Why this instrument adaptation** Measure FLS by language skills  
 - translation from English to Czech  
 - adaptation to Czech conditions  
 - data collection

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## Foreign language learning strategies (FLS) – definition

The first research to deal with second language learning strategies was introduced by Rubin (1975). Later, strategies were defined by Wenden and Rubin (1987) as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information". Chamot and O'Malley (1990, 2006) regard strategies as tools for self-regulated learning. Oxford (1990, 2006) defines learning strategies as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations".

## Research sample

The research (2012) sample consisted of 168 pupils and 13 teachers of upper secondary level of education.

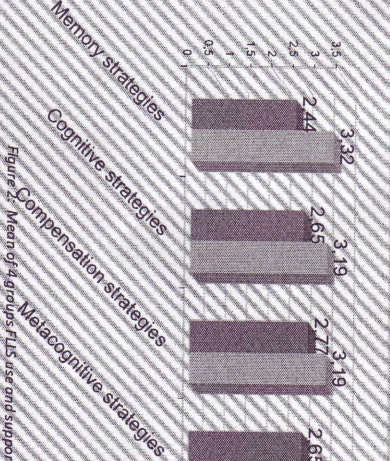
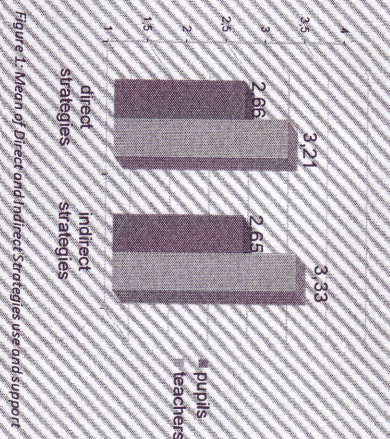
## Data collection

Respondents expressed their level of agreement with statements about using strategies on a four-point scale (no = 1, rather no than yes = 2, rather yes than no = 3, yes = 4).

The average rate of strategy use was distributed normally (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test:  $d = 0.07$ ,  $p = 0.10$ ). The Cronbach alpha of the questionnaire was  $\alpha = 0.97$ , which indicates high reliability of the research instrument. The same analysis was used in the teacher's questionnaire. The average rate of strategy use had a normal distribution too (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test:  $d = 0.14$ ,  $p = 0.20$ ). The Cronbach alpha coefficient ( $\alpha = 0.97$ ), indicates high reliability of the research tool.

## References

Cohen, A., & Weaver, S. (2006). *Styles and Strategic Based Instruction*. Minnesota (USA): The Board of Regents.  
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 Rubin, J., & Wenden, A. (1987). *Learned Strategies in Language Learning*. Heidelberg: Prentice Hall International.  
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## Results

The data were processed in STATISTICA 10.  
 Pupils use direct and indirect strategies less than teachers say that they support them (Figure 1). Teachers almost equally (Table 1) support direct and indirect strategies, and even pupils used both groups at a similar level.

FLS Support by Teachers		FLS Use by Pupils	
Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
$x = 3.21$	$x = 3.33$	$x = 2.66$	$x = 2.65$
$SD = 0.27$	$SD = 0.34$	$SD = 0.31$	$SD = 0.35$

Teachers support metacognitive strategies and memory strategies the most, and this group is used by pupils the least. There are also interesting differences in compensation strategies (Figure 2). They are the most used from all groups of strategies (Table 3), but are the least supported by the teachers as well as cognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies are used by pupils to the same extent, as metacognitive strategies.

## Discussion

The presented results suggest a relation between the teacher support and pupil FLS use. However, we must be aware of the fact that we worked with reported information about the support and use – what the teachers and pupils say they do. Nevertheless, the data analysis showed interesting results, e.g. metacognitive strategies being the most supported by teachers and compensation strategies are the most used by pupils. We would like to explore this data more and subsequently bring more detailed results.

T-test (Table 2) shows significant differences between the responses of pupils and their teachers.

Levene p for Direct strategies	Levene p for Indirect strategies
0.00	0.35

order	teachers support strategies	SD	order	Pupils use strategies	SD		
1.	Metacognitive	3.33	0.34	1.	Compensation	2.77	0.34
2.	Memory	3.32	0.45	2.	Cognitive	2.65	0.35
3.	Cognitive	3.19	0.24	3.	Metacognitive	2.65	0.37
4.	Compensation	3.19	0.34	4.	Memory	2.44	0.43

Table 3 The mean of FLS groups between pupils and teachers.

