



Sources of Internal Self-Regulation with a Focus on Language Learning

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Abstract

The notion that learners have active control over their own learning has stimulated extensive research on the role of language learning strategies. Much of this research has been conducted traditionally in the context of the computer-inspired information processing theory and constructivism. These cognitive theories share the view that one and only one source of internal control regulates learning processes such as attention. The single-source theory tends to be reductionistic and favors sequential strategies for dealing with discrete knowledge structures and skills. Empirical evidence, on the other hand, indicates that the type of learning that is essential for the development of communicative competence must be holistic, contextual, and naturalistic and requires the simultaneous operation of more than one kind of internal self-regulation. This paper discusses a biofunctional theory of multisource internal self-regulation that focuses on the dynamic self-regulatory role of biofunctional subsystems of the nervous system. Dynamic self-regulation is nonexecutive, unintentional, and effort-free in nature. As such, it is viewed as the primary source of internal self-regulation in natural contexts and an essential prerequisite for active self-regulation. Active self-regulation, on the other hand, tends to occur to the extent that the context in which the individual functions ensures the involvement of dynamic self-regulation. The interaction between active and dynamic self-regulation is essential for effective language learning to take place

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