

How to be a more successful language learner.

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# How To Be a More Successful Language Learner

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## How To Be a More Successful Language Learner

Joan Rubin and I. Thompson (1994)

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U.S. \$17.50

*How to Be a More Successful Language Learner*, although written for the language learner, is well. The informal nature of the prose will convince the reader skimming the opening sections persons undertaking the study of a foreign language. Section headings such as “Before You” chapter headings such as “You, the Language Learner” and “What You Know Can Help You” these chapters reveals an entirely different story. In every chapter the authors intersperse to learn is now,” “emotions are important”) with the findings of the latest language acquisition more scholarly texts is not the amount of information but the manner in which it is expressed may seem to be merely the advice of two experienced teachers based on their combined theories in the field. Since there are no references to these theories and no long, scholarly aware of the substantive nature of the recommendations. Those readers familiar with L2 : the recommendations found on almost every page of the book are actually backed by empirical

discussions, followed by practical advice, concerning such issues as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, classrooms, individual learning styles, memory theory, learner-centered learning, caretaker expressions.

The book begins by gently suggesting “there is no stereotype of ‘the good language learner’ combinations of traits that will enable a learner to be successful. In this opening chapter the authors discuss aptitude and on psychological predispositions such as attitude and learning style. In the second chapter, the authors suggest that practicing in “small bits,” even as little as 30 minutes in a while. In the chapter on reading, they suggest that even reading ten minutes a day is a good start. The process of hypothesis formation, testing, and revision known as “successive approximation” and the authors [-1-] remind adult learners that in this long process errors are to be expected and are a natural part of the process.

The third chapter is devoted to a discussion of objectives. In order to be successful language learners, the authors urge prospective students should first figure out what objectives are most important to them. The authors urge learners to be realistic about their level of commitment and the amount of time they can devote to their readers that for different skills there must be different objectives, just as different learners have different needs. To enable learners to set goals effectively, the authors discuss the model of the inverted pyramid (the Teaching of Foreign Languages), and include level descriptions from the ACTFL Guide to Foreign Language Proficiency. All the level descriptions for all four skills may offer more detail than the average learner needs. The book certainly affords language learners many choices in terms of clarifying objectives.

After the issue of objectives, the book focuses on choosing an appropriate setting and course. The authors discuss the advantages and disadvantages of formal and informal settings and discuss the alternatives. The authors remind their readers that individual learning style must be taken into account in making any decision. The discussion of language learning resources, in a later chapter, includes the use of dictionaries, audio and media materials. Every aspect of the language learning process is covered in detail so that learners can make decisions that will make a difference in the course of their study.

Following the discussion on goals and settings, the authors consider the nature of communication. They discuss a variety of social functions associated with the need to communicate, activities (such as interpreting messages, and negotiating meaning), and problems in communicating, such as communication breakdown. The purpose of this chapter, according to the authors, is to remind readers that “language is not learned mechanically and in isolation” (p. 40).

The authors suggest that in order to be effectively in charge of your learning, you must be actively involved. The book is replete with advice concerning strategy use, one chapter is devoted to this important topic. In order to develop awareness of how one learns, learners should keep diaries, talk to classmates about their learning strategies, get advice from the teacher (if she seems to be knowledgeable about strategies), and reflect on their own learning experiences.

language learning process. To help learners be in touch with many aspects of their learning enables learners to focus on specific goals for each of the four skills. The questionnaire also solving problems, and specific strategies for learning grammar, vocabulary, and each of the instructions identify the range of scores that indicate effective techniques associated with that might indicate that learners should reevaluate their strategies with respect to that skill

Since Rubin and Thompson maintain that each skill needs separate attention, they follow devoted to vocabulary and grammar as well as speaking, listening, reading and writing. They well as specific strategies related to each skill.

Throughout the book Rubin and Thompson advocate a learner-centered approach and ex minimize their weaknesses. They suggest that in choosing the language course that is right they would any major purchase. Before making a decision about studying a language, learners enable them to achieve or move towards their goals. The contents of this book enable learners invaluable. For the wealth of useful advice and information packed into this slim volume, strength of all is the encouraging tone offered on every page, which motivates learners to overwhelmed by unavoidable errors produced in the initial phases of language learning.

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