LANGUAGE LEARNING STYLES AND STRATEGIES

Introduction

In “Language Learning Styles and Strategies,” one should synthesizeresearch from various parts of the world on two key variables affecting language learning: styles, i.e.,the general approaches to learning a language; and strategies, the specific behaviors or thoughts learners use to enhance their language learning. These factors influence the student’s ability to learn in a particular instructional framework.

Language learning styles and strategies are among the main factors that help determine how –and how well –our students learn a second or foreign language. A second language is a language studied in a setting where that language is the main vehicle of everyday communication and where abundant input exists in that language. A foreign language is a language studied in an environment where it is not the primary vehicle for daily interaction and where input in that language is restricted. Following the tradition in our field, the term “L2” is used in this course to refer to either a second or a foreign language.

Learning styles are the general approaches –for example, global or analytic, auditory or visual –that students use in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject. These styles are “the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behavior” (Cornett, 1983, p. 9). Of greatest relevance to our context of study this is this statement: “Learning style is the biologically and developmentally imposed set of characteristics that make the same teachingmethod wonderful for some and terrible for others” (Dunn & Griggs, 1988, p. 3).we are going to explore the following aspects of learning style: sensory preferences, personality types, desired degree of generality, and biological differences.

Learning strategies are defined as “specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques -- such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task -- used by students to enhance their own learning” (Scarcella& Oxford, 1992, p. 63). When the learner consciously chooses strategies that fit his or her learning style and the L2 task at hand, these strategies become a useful toolkit for active, conscious, and purposeful selfregulation
of learning. Learning strategies can be classified into six groups: cognitive, meta-cognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective, and social. Each of these is discussed later in this chapter.

It is important to emphasize that learning styles and strategies of individual students can work together with – or conflict with –a given instructional methodology. If there is harmony between (a) the student (in terms of style and strategy preferences) and (b) the combination of instructional methodology and materials, then the student is likely to perform well, feel confident, and experience low anxiety. If clashes occur between (a) and (b), the student often performs poorly, feels unconfident, and experiences significant anxiety. Sometimes such clashes lead to serious breakdowns in teacher-student interaction. These conflicts may also lead to the dispirited student’s outright rejection of the teaching methodology, the teacher, and the subject matter. Now we move to the detailed discussion of learning styles.

Learning Styles

There are four dimensions of learning styles that are likely to be among those most strongly associated with L2 learning: sensory preferences, personality types, desired degree of generality, and biological differences.

Learning styles are not dichotomous (black or white, present or absent). Learning styles generally operate on a continuum or on multiple, intersecting continua. For example, a person might be more extraverted than introverted, or more closure-oriented than open, or equally visual and auditory but with lesser kinesthetic and tactile involvement. Few if any people could be classified as having all or nothing in any of these categories (Ehrman, 1996).

Sensory Preferences

Sensory preferences can be broken down into four main areas: visual, auditory, kinesthetic (movement-oriented), and tactile (touch-oriented). Sensory preferences refer to the physical, perceptual learning channels with which the student is the most comfortable. Visual students like to read and obtain a great deal from visual stimulation. For them, lectures, conversations, and oral directions without any visual backup can be very confusing. In contrast, auditory students are comfortable without visual input and hence enjoy and profit from unembellished lectures, conversations, and oral directions. They are excited by classroom interactions in role-plays and similar activities. They sometimes, however, have difficulty with written work.

Kinesthetic and tactile students like lots of movement and enjoy working with tangible objects, collages, and flashcards. Sitting at a desk for very long is not for them; they prefer to have frequent breaks and move around the room.

Reid (1987) demonstrated that students varied significantly in their sensory preferences, with people from certain cultures differentially favoring the three different modalities for learning. Students from Asian cultures, for instance, were often highly visual,with Koreans being the most visual. Many studies, including Reid's, found that Hispanic learners were frequently auditory. Reid discovered that Japanese are very non auditory. Students from a variety of cultures were tactile and kinesthetic in their sensory preferences. See also Reid (1995) and Oxford and Anderson (1995).

Personality Types

Another style aspect that is important for L2 education is that of personality type, which consists of four strands: extraverted vs. introverted; intuitive-random vs. sensing-sequential; thinking vs. feeling; and closure-oriented/ vs.open/perceiving. Personality type (often called psychological type) is a construct based on the work of psychologist Carl Jung. Ehrman and Oxford (1989, 1990) found a number of significant relationships between personality type and L2 proficiency in native-English-speaking learners of foreign languages. For more on personality type in language learning, see Ehrman (1996) and Oxford (1996b).

1.Extraverted vs. Introverted. By definition, extraverts gain their greatest energy from the external world. They want interaction with people and have many friendships, some deep and some not. In contrast, introverts derive their energy from the internal world, seeking solitude and tending to have just a few friendships, which are often very deep. Extraverts and introverts can learn to work together with the help of the teacher. Enforcing time limits in the L2 classroom can keep extraverts' enthusiasm to a manageable level. Rotating the person in charge of

leading L2 discussions gives introverts the opportunity to participate equally with extraverts.

2.Intuitive-Random vs. Sensing-Sequential. Intuitive-random students think in abstract, futuristic, large-scale, and non-sequential ways. They like to create theories and new possibilities, often have sudden insights, and prefer to guide their own learning. In contrast, sensing-sequential learners are grounded in the here and now. They like facts rather than theories, want guidance and specific instruction from the teacher, and look for consistency. The key to teaching both intuitive-random and sensing-sequential learners is to offer variety and choice: sometimes a highly organized structure for sensing-sequential learners and at other times multiple options and enrichment activities for intuitive-random students.

3.Thinking vs. Feeling. Thinking learners are oriented toward the stark truth, even if it hurts some people's feelings. They want to be viewed as competent and do not tend to offer praise easily –even though they might secretly desire to be praised themselves. Sometimes they seem detached. In comparison, feeling learners value other people in very personal ways. They show empathy and compassion through words, not just behaviors, and say whatever is needed to smooth over difficult situations. Though they often wear their hearts on their sleeves, they want to be respected for personal contributions and hard work. L2 teachers can help thinking learners show greater overt compassion to their feeling classmates and can suggest that feeling learners might tone down their emotional expression while working with thinking learners.

4.Closure-oriented/Judging vs. Open/Perceiving. Closure-oriented students want to reach judgments or completion quickly and want clarity as soon as possible. These students are serious, hardworking learners who like to be given written information and enjoy specific tasks with deadlines. Sometimes their desire for closure hampers the development of fluency (Ehrman& Oxford, 1989). In contrast, open learners want to stay available for continuously new perceptions and are therefore sometimes called "perceiving." They take L2 learning less seriously, treating it like a game to be enjoyed rather than a set of tasks to be completed. Open learners dislike deadlines; they want to have a good time and seem to soak up L2 information by osmosis rather than hard effort. Open learners sometimes do better than closure-oriented learners in developing fluency (Ehrman& Oxford, 1989), but they are at a disadvantage in a traditional classroom setting. Closure-oriented and open learners provide a good balance for each other in the L2 classroom. The former are the task-driven learners, and the latter know how to have fun. Skilled L2 teachers sometimes consciously create cooperative groups that include both types of learners, since these learners can benefit from collaboration with each other.

Desired Degree of Generality

This type contrasts the learner who focuses on the main idea or big picture with the learner who concentrates on details. Global or holistic students like socially interactive, communicative events in which they can emphasize the main idea and avoid analysis of grammatical minutiae. They are comfortable even when not having all the information, and they feel free to guess from the context. Analytic students tend to concentrate on grammatical details and often avoid more free-flowing communicative activities. Because of their concern for precision, analytic learners

typically do not take the risks necessary for guessing from the context unless they are fairly sure of the accuracy of their guesses. The global student and the analytic student have much to learn from each other. A balance between generality and specificity is very useful for L2 learning.

Biological Differences

Differences in L2 learning style can also be related to biological factors, such as biorhythms, sustenance, and location. Biorhythms reveal the times of day when students feel good and perform their best. Some L2 learners are morning people, while others do not want to start learning until the afternoon, and still others are creatures of the evening, happily "pulling an all-nighter" when necessary. Sustenance refers to the need for food or drink while learning.

Quite a number of L2 learners do not feel comfortable learning without a candy bar, a cup of coffee, or a soda in hand, but others are distracted from study by food and drink. Location involves the nature of the environment: temperature, lighting, sound, and even the firmness of the chairs. L2 students differ widely with regard to these environmental factors. The biological aspects of L2 learning style are often forgotten, but vigilant teachers can often make accommodations and compromises when needed.

Beyond the Stylistic Comfort Zone

L2 learners clearly need to make the most of their style preferences. However, occasionally they must also extend themselves beyond their style preferences. By providing a wide range of classroom activities that cater to different learning styles, teachers can help L2 students develop beyond the comfort zone dictated by their natural style preferences. The

key is systematically offering a great variety of activities within a learner-centered, communicative approach.

Assessing L2 Learning Style

By far the most common type of assessment tool for L2 learning styles is the written survey. In surveys, students answer questions that reveal their particular style preferences. Style surveys vary in reliability and validity, but in the last few decades they have provided data from which teachers and students have begun to understand L2 styles. See Reid (1995) for examples of such surveys.

Language Learning Strategies

As seen earlier, L2 learning strategies are specific behaviors or thought processes that students use to enhance their own L2 learning. The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word strategia, which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war. The warlike meaning of strategia has fortunately fallen away, but the control and goal directedness remain in the modern version of the word (Oxford, 1990).

A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is thoroughly considered. What makes a strategy positive and helpful for a given learner? A strategy is useful if the following conditions are present: (a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand, (b) the strategy fits the particular student's learning style preferences to one degree or another, and (c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies. Strategies that fulfill these conditions "make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (Oxford, 1990, p. 8). Learning strategies can also enable students to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learners (Allwright, 1990; Little, 1991).

Yet students are not always aware of the power of consciously using L2 learning
strategies for making learning quicker and more effective (Nyikos& Oxford, 1993). Skilled teachers help their students develop an awareness of learning strategies and enable them to use a wider range of appropriate strategies.

When left to their own devices and if not encouraged by the teacher or forced by the lesson to use a certain set of strategies, students typically use learning strategies that reflect their basic learning styles (Ehrman& Oxford, 1989; Oxford, 1996a, 1996b). However, teachers can actively

help students “stretch” their learning styles by trying out some strategies that are outside of their primary style preferences. This can happen through strategy instruction, as will be discussed later.

Conscious Movement Toward Goals

Learning strategies are intentionally used and consciously controlled by the learner (Pressley with McCormick, 1995). In our field, virtually all definitions of strategies imply conscious movement toward a language goal (Bialystok, 1990; Oxford, 1990, 1996a). Let us consider Divna, whose goal is to conduct research in chemistry with the help of articles written in the L2. She is a busy professional without a lot of extra time for reading journals, but she needs the information contained in them. To meet the need, she plans a manageable task:finding and reading one L2 article per week on chemistry until she develops a rapid reading rate and is able to identify and understand published research findings.

Other strategies to help Divna accomplish this task might include scheduling time each week to search for an article in the library or on the Internet, as well as preparing herself by looking at articles on related topics in her own language. In addition, she could use strategies such as skimming for the main points, reading carefully for supporting details, keeping a notebook for L2 scientific vocabulary, using the dictionary to look up difficult words, guessing the meaning of words from the context, and making a written outline or summary if needed. The well-orchestrated set of strategies used by Divna might be called a strategy chain, i.e., a set of interlocking, related,and mutually supportive strategies.

Positive Outcomes from Strategy Use

In subject areas outside of L2 learning, the use of learning strategies is demonstrably related to student achievement and proficiency (Pressley &Associates, 1990). Research has repeatedly shown this relationship in

content fields ranging from physics to reading and from social studies to science. In light of this remarkable association between learning strategy use and positive learning outcomes, it is not surprising that students who frequently employ learning strategies enjoy a high level of self-efficacy, i.e., a perception of being effective as learners (Zimmerman & Pons, 1986).

In the L2 arena, early studies of so-called "good language learners" (Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, &Todesco, 1975; Rubin, 1975) determined that such learners consistently used certain types of learning strategies, such as guessing meaning from the context. Later studies found that there was no single set of strategies always used by "good language learners," however.

Those studies found that less able learners used strategies in a random, unconnected, and uncontrolled manner (Abraham & Vann, 1987; Chamot et al., 1996), while more effective learners showed careful orchestration of strategies, targeted in a relevant, systematic way at specific L2 tasks. In an investigation by Nunan (1991), more effective learners differed from less effective learners in their greater ability to reflect on and articulate their own language learning processes. In a study of learners of English in Puerto Rico, more successful students used strategies for active involvement more frequently than did less successful learners, according to Green and Oxford (1995).

Strategy Instruction Research

To increase L2 proficiency, some researchers and teachers have provided instruction that helped students learn how to use more relevant and more powerful learning strategies. In ESL/EFL studies, positive effects of strategy instruction emerged for proficiency in speaking(Dadour& Robbins, 1996; O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Küpper, & Russo, 1985)and reading (Park-Oh, 1994),

although results for listening were not significant (O'Malley etal., 1985). Chamot et al. (1996), Cohen et al. (1995), and Cohen and Weaver (1998)investigated the effects of strategy instruction among native-English-speaking learners of foreign languages and found some positive results mixed with neutral findings. In other studies, strategy instruction led to increased EFL learning motivation (Nunan, 1997) and, among native-English-speaking learners of foreign languages, greater strategy use and self-efficacy (Chamot et al., 1996).

Six Main Categories of L2 Learning Strategies

Six major groups of L2 learning strategies have been identified by Oxford (1990). Alternative taxonomies have been offered by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and others.

1.Cognitive strategies enable the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways, e.g., through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas (knowledge structures), practicing in naturalistic settings, and practicing structures and sounds formally. Cognitive strategies were significantly related to L2 proficiency in studies by Kato (1996), Ku (1995), Oxford and Ehrman (1995), Oxford, Judd, and Giesen (1998), and Park (1994), among others. Of these studies, three were specifically in EFL settings: Ku (Taiwan), Oxford, Judd, and Giesen (Turkey), and Park (Korea). The other two studies involved the learning of Kanji by native English speakers (Kato, 1996) and the learning of various foreign languages by native English speakers (Oxford & Ehrman, 1995).

2.Metacognitive strategies (e.g., identifying one's own learning style preferences and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy) are employed for managing the learning process overall. Among native English speakers learning foreign languages, Purpura (1999) found that metacognitive strategies had "a significant, positive, direct effect on cognitive strategy use, providing clear evidence that meta cognitive strategy use has an executive function over cognitive strategy usein task completion" (p. 61). Studies of EFL learners in various countries (e.g., in South Africa, Dreyer & Oxford, 1996; and in Turkey, Oxford, Judd, &Giesen, 1998) uncovered evidence that metacognitive strategies are often strong predictors of L2 proficiency.

3.Memory-related strategies help learners link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding. Various memory-related strategies enable learners to learn and retrieve information in an orderly string (e.g., acronyms), while other techniques create learning and retrieval via sounds (e.g., rhyming), images (e.g., a mental picture of the word itself or the meaning of the word), a combination of sounds and images(e.g., the keyword method), body movement (e.g., total physical response), mechanical means(e.g., flashcards), or location (e.g., on a page or blackboard) (see Oxford, 1990 for details and multiple examples).

However, memory-related strategies do not always positively relate to L2 proficiency. In fact, the use of memory strategies in a test-taking situation had a significant *negative* relationship to learners' test performance in grammar and vocabulary (Purpura, 1997). The probable reason for this is that memory strategies are often used for memorizing

vocabulary and structures in initial stages of language learning, but that learners need such strategies much less when their arsenal of vocabulary and structures has become larger.

4. Compensatory strategies (e.g., guessing from the context in listening and reading; to aid speaking and writing; using gestures or pause words) help the learner make up for missing knowledge. Cohen (1998) asserted that compensatory strategies that are used for speaking and writing (often known as a form of communication strategies) are intended only for language use and must not be considered to be language learning strategies. However, Little (personal communication, January, 1999) and Oxford (1990, 1999a) contend that compensation strategies of any kind, even though they might be used for language use, nevertheless aid in language learning as well. After all, each instance of L2 use is an opportunity for more L2learning.

5. Affective strategies, such as identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive self talk, have been shown to be significantly related to L2 proficiency in research by Dreyer and Oxford (1996) among EFL learners. However, in other studies, such as that of Mullins (1992) with EFL learners in Thailand, affective strategies showed a negative link with some measures of L2 proficiency. One reason might be that as some students progress toward proficiency, they no longer need affective strategies as much as before. Perhaps because learners' use of cognitive, meta-cognitive, and social strategies is related to greater L2proficiency and self-efficacy, over time there might be less need for affective strategies as learners' progress to higher proficiency.

6. Social strategies (e.g., asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native-speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms) help the learner work with others and understand the target culture as well as the language. Social strategies were significantly associated with L2 proficiency in studies by the South African EFL study by Dreyer and Oxford (1996) and the investigation of native-English-speaking foreign language learners by Oxford and Ehrman (1995).

Implications for L2 Teaching

The research synthesized above has four implications for classroom practice: assessing styles and strategies in the L2 classroom, attuning L2 instruction and strategy instruction to learners' style preferences, remembering that no single L2 instructional methodology fits all students, and preparing for and conducting strategy instruction.

a. Assessing Styles and Strategies in the L2 Classroom

L2 teachers could benefit by assessing the learning styles and the strategy use of their students, because such assessment leads to greater understanding of styles and strategies. Teachers also need to assess the styles and strategies, so that they will be aware of their preferences and of possible biases. Useful means exist to make these assessments, as mentioned earlier. Teachers can learn about assessment options by reading books or journals, attending professional conferences, or taking relevant courses or workshops.

b. Attuning L2 Instruction and Strategy Instruction to Learners' Style Needs

The more that teachers know about their students' style preferences, the more effectively they can orient their L2 instruction, as well as the strategy teaching that can be interwoven into language instruction, matched to those style preferences. Some learners might need instruction presented more visually, while others might require more auditory, kinesthetic, or tactile types of instruction. Without adequate knowledge about their individual students' style preferences, teachers cannot systematically provide the needed instructional variety.

c. Remembering that No Single L2 Instructional Methodology Fits All Students

Styles and strategies help determine a particular learner's ability and willingness to work within the framework of various instructional methodologies. It is foolhardy to think that a single L2 methodology could possibly fit an entire class filled with students who have a range of stylistic and strategic preferences. Instead of choosing a specific instructional methodology, L2 teachers would do better to employ a broad instructional approach, notably the best version of the communicative approach that contains a combined focus on form and fluency. Such an approach allows for deliberate, creative variety to meet the needs of all students in the class.

d. Preparing for and Conducting L2 Strategy Instruction

L2 teachers should consider various ways to prepare to conduct strategy instruction in their classes. Helpful preparatory steps include taking teacher development courses, finding relevant information in print or on the Internet, and making contacts with specialists.

Although we do not yet know all we wish to know about optimal strategy instruction, there is growing evidence that L2 teachers can and should conduct strategy instruction in their classrooms. For some teachers it might be better to start with small strategy interventions, such as helping L2 readers learn to analyze words and guess meanings from the context, rather than with full-scale strategies-based instruction involving a vast array of learning strategies and the four language skills, i.e., reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Other teachers might want to move rapidly into strategies-based instruction. Strategies based instruction is not so much a separate "instructional method" as it is sound strategy instruction interwoven with the general communicative language teaching approach noted above. In evaluating the success of any strategy instruction, teachers should look for individuals' progress toward L2 proficiency and for signs of increased self-efficacy or motivation

NEEDS ANALYSIS

Needs analysis (also known as needs assessment) has a vital role inthe process of designing and carrying out any language course. Whetherit is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or general English course, its centrality has been acknowledged by several scholars and authors (Munby, 1978; Richterich and Chancerel, 1987; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989; Tarone and Yule, 1989; Robinson, 1991; Johns, 1991; West, 1994; Allison *et al*. (1994); Seedhouse, 1995;Jordan, 1997; Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998; Iwai *et al*. 1999; Hamp-Lyons, 2001; Finney, 2002). Also, the importance of carrying out a needs analysis for developing EAP tests is emphasized by Fulcher (1999), McDonough (1984), and Carrol (1980, cited in Fulcher, 1999).

According to Iwai *et al*. (1999), the term needs analysis generally refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the needs of a particular group of students.

Brindley (1989) and Berwick (1989) offer definitions of different types of needs and accounts of various problems and limitations in making use of this concept, including ways in which we might usefully distinguish between needs identified by analysts and those expressed or experienced by learners. In his state-of-the-art article, West (1994) gives a thorough overview of needs analysis in language teaching, including its history, theoretical basis, approaches to needs analysis, etc.

According to Iwai *et al*. (1999), formal needs analysis is relatively new to the field of language teaching. However, informal needs analyses have been conducted by teachers in order to assess what language points

their students needed to master. In fact, the reason why different approaches were born and then replaced by others is that teachers have intended to meet the needs of their students during their learning.

From the field of language teaching the focus is on ESP. Clearly, the role of needs analysis in any ESP course is indisputable. For Johns (1991), needs analysis is the first step in course design and it provides validity and relevancy for all subsequent course design activities.

Though needs analysis, as we know it today, has gone through many stages, with the publication of Munby's Communicative Syllabus Design in 1978, situations and functions were set within the frame of needs analysis. In his book, Munby introduced 'communication needs processor' which is the basis of Munby's approach to needs analysis.

Based on Munby's work, Chambers (1980) introduced the term *Target Situation Analysis*. From that time several other terms have also been introduced: *Present Situation Analysis*, *Pedagogic Needs Analysis*, *Deficiency Analysis*, *Strategy Analysis* or *Learning Needs Analysis*, *Means Analysis*, *Register analysis*, *Discourse analysis*, and *Genre Analysis*. It is in this context that we attempt to present an overview of theaforementioned approaches to needs analysis. We suffice by studying two approaches and you(English master students) inquire about the rest.

I.MUNBY'S MODEL: 'communication needs processor':

In Munby's CNP, the target needs and target level performance are established by investigating the target situation, and his overall model clearly establishes the place of needs analysis as central to ESP, indeed the necessary starting point in materials or course design (West, 1998).In the CNP, account is taken of "the variables that affect communication needs by organizing them as parameters in a dynamic relationship to each other" (Munby, 1978: 32).

Munby's overall model is made up of the following elements:

1. **Participants**: information about the identity and language of the learners: age, sex, nationality, present command of target language, other languages known and extent of command;

2. **Communication Needs Processor**: investigates the particular communication needs according to socio-cultural and stylistic variables which interact to determine a profile of such needs;
3. **Profile of Needs**: is established through the processing of data in the CNP;
4. In the **Meaning Processor** "parts of the socio-culturally determined profile of communication needs are converted into semantic subcategories of a predominantly pragmatic kind, and marked with attitudinal tone" (Munby, 1978: 42);
5. **The Language Skills Selector**: identifies "the specific language skills that are required to realize the events or activities that have been identified in the CNP" (Munby, 1978: 40);
6. **The Linguistic Encoder**: considers "the dimension of contextual appropriacy" (Munby, 1978: 49), one the encoding stage has been reached;
7. **The Communicative Competence Specification**: indicates the target communicative competence of the participant and is the translated profile of needs.

From the above-mentioned elements of the Munby model, the predominant one or at least the one that has been referred to by other researchers of needs analysis is the Communication Needs Processor (CNP) which is the basis of Munby's approach to needs analysis and

establishes the profile of needs through the processing of eight parameters the processing of which gives us a detailed description of particular communication needs (Munby, 1978). The parameters specified by Munby (1987) are:

• **Purposive domain**: this category establishes the type of ESP, and then the purpose which the target language will be used for at the end of the course.

• **Setting**: the physical setting specifying the spatial and temporal aspects of the situation where English will be used, and the psychological setting specifying the different environment in which English will be used.

• **Interaction**: identifies the learner's interlocutors and predicts relationship between them.

• **Instrumentality**: specifies the medium, i.e., whether the language to be used is written, spoken, or both; mode, i.e., whether the language to be used is in the form of monologue, dialogue or any other; and channel of communication, i.e., whether it is face to face, radio, or any other.

• **Dialect**: dialects learners will have to understand or produce in terms of their spatial, temporal, or social aspect.

• Communicative event: states what the participants will have to do productively or receptively.

• **Communicative key**: the manner in which the participants will have to do the activities comprising an event, e.g. politely or impolitely.

• **Target level**: level of linguistic proficiency at the end of the ESP course which might be different for different skills.

The aim of Munby's CNP is to find as thoroughly as possible the linguistic form a prospective ESP learner is likely to use in various situations in his target working environment. The outcome of the processing data by means of Munby's model is, as Hutchinson and Waters (1987) say, what the learner needs to know in order to function effectively in the target situation. Most subsequent target needs analysis research was based on Munby's model for the reason that it offers comprehensive data banks and target performance (Robinson, 1991).

For Munby, the analysis of target situation needs is in essence a matter of asking questions about the target situation and the attitudes towards that situation of various participants in the learning process. The analyst/teacher should find answers to a list of questions that relate to the Munbian model. These relations can be summarized below:

1. Why is language needed? (purposive domain)
• for study;
• for work;
• for training;
• for a combination of these;
• for some other purposes, e.g. status, examination,

2. How will the language be used? (instrumentality)
• Medium: speaking, writing, reading, etc.;
• Channel: e.g. telephone, face to face;
• Types of text or discourse: e.g. academic text,
lectures, catalogues, etc.
3. What will the content areas be?(Communicative event)
• Subjects: e.g. medicine, biology, commerce,
shipping, etc.;

• Level: technician, craftsman, postgraduate, etc.

4. Where will the language be used? Setting (physical and psychological)
• Physical setting: e.g. office, lecture theater, hotel,
workshop, library;
• Human context: alone, meetings, demonstrations,
on telephone;
• Linguistic context: e.g. in own country, abroad.

5. When will the language be used?
• Concurrently with the ESP course or subsequently;
• Frequently, seldom, in small amounts, in large chunks.

Like any other model/approach, however, Munby's model is not without its critics. Munby provided detailed lists of micro-functions in his CNP. What he did not include was how to prioritize them or any of the affective factors which today are recognized as important (Dudley-Evansand St. John, 1998).

West (1994: 9-10) mentions the shortcomings of the Munby's model in terms of four headings:
1. **Complexity**: Munby's attempt to be systematic and comprehensive inevitably made his instrument inflexible, complex, and time-consuming.
2. **Learner-centeredness**: Munby claims that his CNP is learner centered. The starting point may be the learner but the model collects data *about* the learner rather than *from* the learner.
3. **Constraints**: Munby's idea is that constraints should be considered after the needs analysis procedure, while many researchers feel that these

practical constraints should be considered at the start of the needs analysis process.

4. **Language**: Munby fails to provide a procedure for converting the learner profile into a language syllabus.

II. Means Analysis

Means analysis tries to investigate those considerations that Munby excludes (West, 1998), that is, matters of logistics and pedagogy that led to debate about practicalities and constraints in implementing needs-based language courses (West, 1994). Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998: 125) suggest that means analysis provides us "information about the environment in which the course will be run" and thus attempts to adapt the ESP course to the cultural environment in which it will be run.

One of the main issues means analysis is concerned with is an "acknowledgement that what works well in one situation may not work in another" (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998: 124), and that, as noted above, ESP syllabi should be sensitive to the particular cultural environment in which the course will be imposed. Or as Jordan (1997) says it should provide us with a tool for designing an environmentally sensitive course. Swales (1989, quoted in West, 1994) list some factors which relate to the learning environment and should be considered by curriculum specialists if the course is to be successful. These considerations include elements such as classroom culture, EAP staff and piloting the target situation analysis.

CONCLUSION

Different approaches to needs analysis attempt to meet the needs of the learners in the process of learning a second language. Not a single approach to needs analysis can be a reliable indicator of what is needed to enhance learning. Today, there is an awareness of the fact that different types of needs analyses are not exclusive but complementary and that each of them provides a piece to complete the jigsaw of needs analysis.

All the works done in ESP have sought to promote the communicative nature of language teaching. Teachers have been very concerned with the needs of students as they used the language, rather than language *per se*. For this reason, today needs analysis should not be (and is not) of concern only within the field of ESP, but also that of General English because the needs of the learners is of paramount importance in any language process.

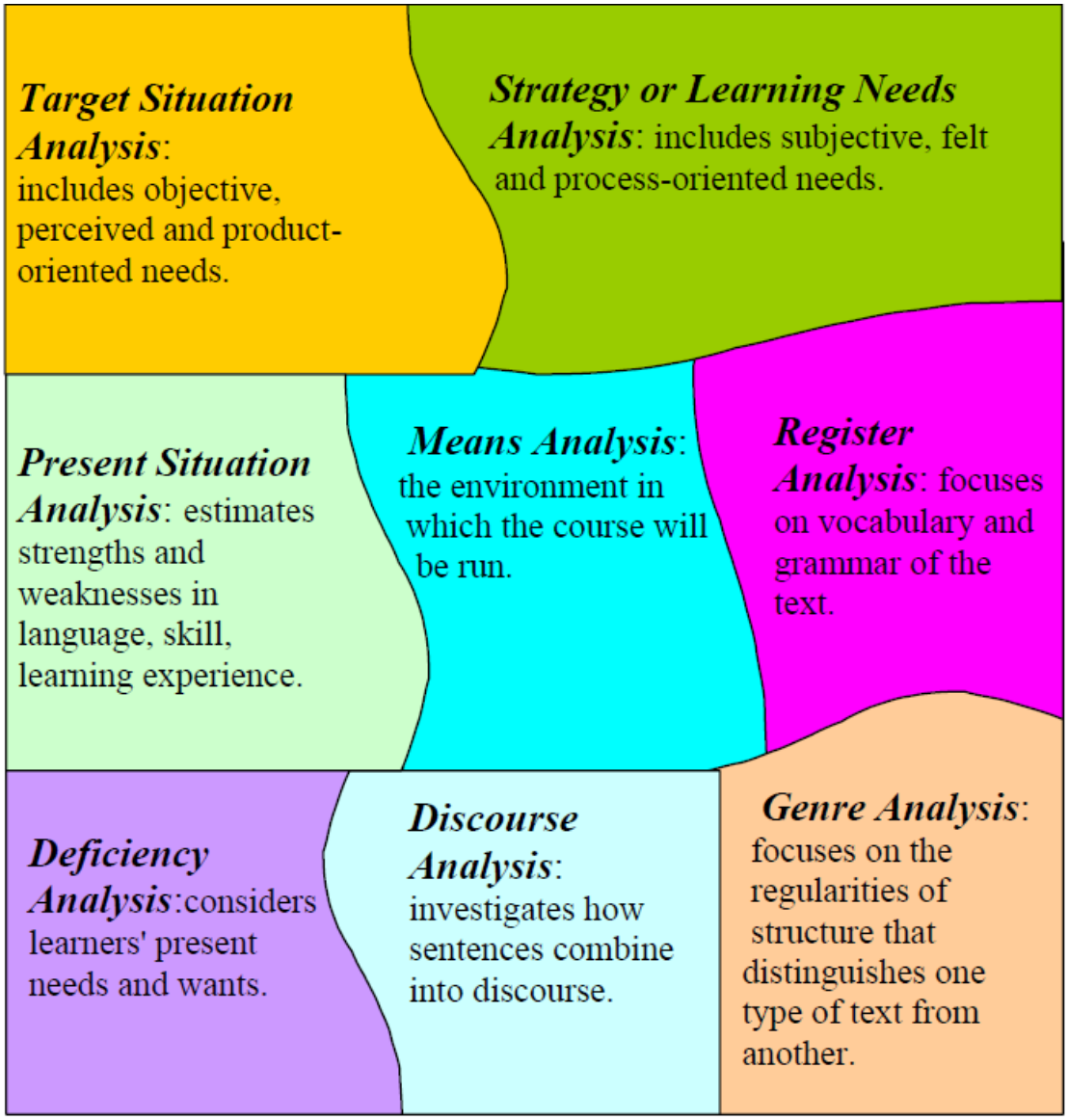

Figure1. Needs Analysis Jigsaw