

Naturally Occurring Language Learning Strategy Instruction in an Adult EFL classroom

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Abstract

Strategy instruction in a language classroom has been a focus of many studies; however, most of them were quantitative in design, which resulted in a limited knowledge of instructional practices. In this case study, Language Learning Strategy Instruction (LLSI) in an adult classroom of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Poland was examined through naturalistic observation. The transcript of 30 consecutive lessons, an entire language course at an advanced level, was analyzed to identify the teacher's and students' utterances that indicated LLSI. Thirty-seven LLSI events were identified. Findings revealed that LLSI in these events took different forms, occurred across different language skills, and considered different strategy categories, whereas the frequency and explicitness of the instruction depended on the course phase. Data analysis also revealed the effects of LLSI in different language skills. Most importantly, this paper provides examples of instructional practices for teaching grammar, pronunciation, speaking, spelling, reading comprehension, and vocabulary strategies, which can form important pedagogical implications.

1 Introduction

Since the so-far Language Learning Strategy Instruction (LLSI) studies focused on the learner and were mainly quantitative in design (Plonsky, 2011, 2019), little is known about teachers' instructional practices, more specifically, what strategies are promoted and how they are presented and practised (Chamot & Harris, 2019; Psaltou-Joycey et al., 2018). Naturalistic evaluations of such are desirable (Hassan et al., 2005), however, the analysis of exploratory talks between the teacher and learners, and learners themselves, though being a powerful tool that allows understanding "strategic learning spaces", has been rarely used (Coyle, 2019, p. 62). Therefore, the present study attempts to fill in this gap in research. Findings further our understanding of the practical application of L2 strategy instruction in an adult EFL classroom. Since the naturalistic observation accounted for a longer period of time, the frequency, explicitness, and effect of the instruction will be discussed, as well as its forms and language skills involved. Most importantly, examples of real classroom interactions that indicate strategy instruction will be presented, which may potentially have pedagogical implications for L2 teacher training.

2 Conceptual framework of strategy instruction in a foreign and second language

LLSI has been approached in different ways (e.g. Macaro, 2001; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990), but they all involved four essential elements, which are: (1) raising awareness of the

strategies students are already using; (2) presentation and modelling of strategies; (3) multiple practice opportunities to help students develop autonomous use of the strategies through gradual withdrawal of scaffolding; and (4) self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies used and transfer of the strategies to new tasks (Rubin, Chamot, Harris, & Anderson, 2007). The last step is pivotal in strategy instruction as it develops students' metacognitive awareness and responsibility for learning (Chamot, 2009).

It is debatable, and a crucial point in investigating LLSI from the teacher's perspective, whether strategies should be taught exclusively in an explicit way, that is when the teacher presents strategies directly and talks about them explicitly, or whether strategy instruction can be incorporated into a regular language lesson, that is it can be implicit (Psaltou-Joycey et al., 2018). Nowadays, many L2 strategy experts stress the importance of explicit teaching in strategy instruction (e.g. Chamot & Harris, 2019; Gu, 2019). However, considering Coyle's recent view (2019, p. 57) on developing strategic behaviour in language learners, it seems that there is no clear cut between the explicit and implicit strategy instruction as it is dynamic with the involvement of both "spontaneous and planned learning conversations between teachers and learners." Since teaching and learning roles in these conversations are not pre-determined, the strategic instruction becomes "strategic interaction"; in this dynamic learning space, it does not matter whether strategy instruction is teacher- or student-led, or is explicit or implicit (Coyle, 2019, p. 57). Yet, Macaro (2001) stresses that the teacher's role is central in teaching cognitive and direct strategies as these are strictly related to second language development. In contrast, the teacher's role in enhancing metacognitive strategies may be secondary as these strategies are relevant for other academic subjects. Research findings, however, revealed that teachers promoted both cognitive and metacognitive strategies (e.g. Psaltou-Joycey, Agathopoulou, Petrogiannis, & Gavriilidou, 2017; Psaltou-Joycey et al., 2018).

Moreover, the form of LLSI depends on its content focus and the learner's age. Strategy instruction in an adult classroom needs to be strictly context- and problem-related, and the use of strategies should be presented in terms of possible usefulness rather than recommendations (Rubin et al., 2007). The teacher needs to acknowledge that their students already have a considerable language learning experience and substantial strategic knowledge, which, in practice, means that adult learners should be able to articulate their thinking processes and work independently or in small groups (Rubin et al., 2007). Therefore, teaching a particular strategy or a set of strategies may be less productive in an adult classroom. Instead, awareness of different strategies should be raised, for example, through think-alouds, that is when students describe what they are doing while working on a task, or asking students to explain how they arrived at the answer and share it with the rest of the class (Rubin et al., 2007). Such strategic interaction can be analyzed through dialogic episodes, which are learning dialogues between the teacher and learners, between learners, conducted both on the whole-class level and individually (Coyle, 2019).

3 Methodology

3.1 *Aim and research questions*

This case study aimed at investigating LLSI that occurred naturally in a classroom of adults EFL learners at an advanced level. Its design was based on observational studies in the second language acquisition (SLA) and in the education field (e.g. Davin, 2013, 2016; Anmarkrud & Bråten, 2012; Magnusson, Roe, & Blikstad-Balas, 2019). Considering the methodology of these studies and the re-view of LLSI (Hassan et al., 2005; Plonsky, 2011, 2019), this study sought an answer to the following questions:

RQ1. How frequent will LLSI be?

RQ2. What language skills will it concern, and how will strategy instruction for different language skills be practised?

RQ3. What forms will it take in terms of types of interaction, the degree of explicitness, essential elements, and strategy category?

RQ4. Will there be any evidence of the effect of LLSI?

3.2 Participants

Participants in this study were ten adult learners and their teacher. Students' age ranged between 31 and 55, and their overall level of English language proficiency oscillated between B2+ and C1 according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. The teacher was a female Polish-language speaker with an MA degree in teaching EFL and more than ten years of professional experience. The course was facilitated by a private language school operating nation-wide in Poland.

In order not to pre-determine teaching and learning behaviour, minimal information about the research aim was revealed to the participants. Participants were also informed that the data collected would stay confidential and anonymous, and they gave written consent for lessons to be audio-rec-orded and data to be analyzed and published.

3.3 Procedure

Initially, video recording was planned for data collection; however, the room capacity and the lack of consent from the participants did not allow to use such a form of data collection. Eventually, the data source was the audio-transcript and an observational form to capture both physical and verbal context (Chaudron, 2003). Field notes, which were taken by the researcher and author of this paper, kept a record of actual actions and tasks performed.

Since the length of strategy instruction is salient (Plonsky, 2019) and developing strategic competence and behaviour needs time (Macaro, 2001, 2019), the recording for analysis in this study constituted 30 consecutive 60-minute lessons. The recorded lessons formed the entire pre-preparatory course for an internationally recognised EFL exam at the advanced level (the *Certificate in Advanced English*, CAE). Also, the findings of the pilot study suggested longer recorded material for analysis; in this study, only four 45-minute lessons were recorded, and the analysis revealed only one episode that suggested strategy instruction.

The record for analysis was 1740 minutes. The audio-recordings were transcribed using the CLAN program (MacWhinney & Wagner, 2010). Apart from the editor's support within the program, the final transcript was checked for the second time by listening to the recording and making additional adjustments. The field notes were then added to the transcript to mark actions and tasks performed in the classroom.

Quantitative data included word count, the percentage of occurrence, as well as calculation of statistical significance and correlations, whereas qualitative data were examples of dialogic episodes. The following codes and phrases will be used when discussing the data (Table 1)

Table 1. Codes and phrases used when discussing the results

Codes and phrases	Meaning
LLSI event	a dialogic episode that indicated strategy instruction; the eligibility criteria included at least one of the essential elements of strategy instruction (Rubin et al., 2007) and some degree of explicitness, that is at least reference to a strategy or prompting the use of a strategy, according to the descriptors of strategy instruction in Magnusson et al. (2019, p. 194; see Table 2)
Course cycle 1 (CC1)	the initial phase of the course that encompasses lessons 1–10
Course cycle 2 (CC2)	the middle phase of the course that encompasses lessons 11–20
Course cycle 3 (CC3)	the final phase of the course that encompasses lessons 21–30

3.4 *Data analysis*

To answer the research questions (RQ), a mixed-methods approach was adopted. Quantitative data included word count, the percentage of occurrence, and the calculation of statistical significance and correlations, whereas qualitative data were examples of dialogic episodes. The codes and phrases shown in Table 1 above will be used when discussing the results.

The first line of data analysis aimed at identifying LLSI events in the transcript according to the LLSI criteria. It was done solely by the researcher and author of this paper in two independent events. The identified events were then described in detail adding information from the field notes to facilitate further coding.

Coding for the frequency of LLSI occurrence (RQ1), language skills (RQ2), and forms (RQ3) was conducted by the researcher and author of this paper. Data were coded twice. The coded data were then compared. There were no major discrepancies between the two codings. In the second coding, the researcher used a more detailed labelling for language skills, by including subskills and the task context.

The data for the forms of LLSI, given their complexity, were additionally coded by an external verifier. The coders then compared the outcomes of their coding to identify discrepancies. The discrepancies, which constituted 11% in total, were reviewed together until a full agreement was reached.

The second line of data analysis concerned the identification of teaching and learning situations in which LLSI could have occurred (potential LLSI events); in these situations, there was no evidence of such instruction according to the eligibility criteria of the LLSI event. The researcher and author of this paper read the transcript and the field notes to identify such situations.

The final data analysis aimed at identifying the effect of LLSI (RQ4). It was also conducted by the researcher and author of this paper by identifying in the transcript and the field notes teaching and learning situations that evidenced the effect of LLSI events.

4 **Results**

4.1 *Frequency of LLSI*

Following the finding of the study regarding quantifying talk (Wardle et al., 2011), the analysis included speaking events and the word count within these events. The corpus of analysis constituted 51,560 words.

Thirty-seven LLSI events were identified; most of them happened in CC1 – 20 (54%), whereas in CC2 there were 11 (30%) and in CC3 only six (16%) of such events. The speech in these events constituted 2,774 words, which was approximately 5.5% of the corpus.

There were 29 events in which LLSI could have occurred. The majority of them (14; 48%) were identified in CC3; nine such events (31%) were identified in CC2, and six (21%) in CC1. Thus, the LLSI events that occurred (i.e. identified LLSI events) and the one that could have occurred in the course (i.e. potential LLSI events) were inversely proportional.

4.2 *Language skills*

The majority of LLSI events concerned vocabulary (20; 54%). Seven were about learning new words or phrases, ten in the context of the use of English in which students had to fill in a gap with a missing word, and three which required from students to form a new word from the provided

prompt word using the context of the text. Two events concerned strategies for speaking (communicating with others) (5.5%) and four for pronunciation (11%). Five events (13.5%) concerned grammar in the context of the use of English in which students had to fill in a gap in the text with the correct grammatical form. Spelling strategies were taught on four (11%) and reading comprehension only on two (5.5%) occasions.

In contrast, the majority of LLSI that could have potentially occurred concerned listening comprehension tasks (10, 34.5%); six (20.5%) were in the context of reading comprehension tasks, four concerned vocabulary learning (14%) and essay writing (14%), three (10%) were about grammar in the context of the use of English, and two (7%) about spelling.

LLSI regarding vocabulary learning included, for example, and as illustrated in Excerpt 1, a conversation between two students about the effectiveness of strategies to memorize new vocabulary.

Excerpt 1 (LLSI event 11)

1. Student 1 (S1): You know, I have a problem with learning these vocabulary. Some people tell me that I can remember something by connotation but then I need to remember connotation and I forget it ... I mean I need to remember two things instead of one.
2. Student 2 (S2): Yes, the same with me. I don't like it. So what do you do to remember these vocabulary?
3. S1: I try to remember (laughing). I just read, look at them.
4. S2: For example, how can you remember this word? Crazy! It's so long.
5. S1: You can break it down and say each part, loud with voice, na głoś [out loud], you know. Like this, /ema/-/kju/-/leit/.
6. S2: OK, I will try it for next time. I will be well prepared for the next word game!
7. S1: You can always ask [name of the student]. He always knows these crazy words.

In this excerpt, students first discussed the effectiveness of a memorisation strategy (Turn 1 and 2). Then, one of them presented a strategy that she used to memorize new vocabulary (Turn 5), and another solution that they could use in case they cannot come up with the correct word in a vocabulary game (Turn 7). The teacher in this LLSI event was a silent observant. When the students were discussing the strategies, the teacher just nodded her head for approval.

Concerning speaking (communicating with others), in LLSI event 28, as presented in Excerpt 2, a student talked about the strategy that she used when talking to native English speakers (Turn 8). The teacher asked about the effectiveness of the strategy (Turn 9) and suggested an additional strategy (Turn 13) to overcome a problem the student had identified (Turn 10).

Excerpt 2 (LLSI event 28)

8. S: When I listen to Scottish people I always need to first ... how to say ... prepare myself. I mean concentrate before they start speaking.
9. T: This is interesting. And, does it help?
10. S: Yes and no. I'm not sure. It is very stressful, especially when they ask questions.
11. T: So, if you don't understand the question, what can you do?
12. S: I don't know.
13. T: You can always ask the person to repeat the question.
14. S: Ok. But, it is not rude?
15. T: Not really. You just ask for clarification.

Excerpt 3 illustrates teaching pronunciation strategies (LLSI event 4):

Excerpt 3 (LLSI event 4)

16. S: There are many cultural events in Poland. Tourists can choose whatever they want.
17. T: I see. I completely agree with you. [The name of the student], can you please read this word?
18. S: /kʌt/

19. T: Can you now read this word?
 20. S: Hmm ... /k/ ... /kʌltʃerʌl/.
 21. T: Well done. Like /kʌt/. /'kʌltʃ(ə)r(ə)l/ [T exaggerated the pronunciation of the second letter in the word *cut* and *cultural*]. Do you see the similarity? The letter u [T pronounced it here as /oo/] in English is often read as /ʌ/. Just remember the word *cut*.
 22. S: /kʌt/, /kʌltʃerʌl/
 23. T: [Another student's name], can you please read this word?
 24. S2: /frʌstreitɪd/
 25. T: OK, well done.

In this event, a student mispronounced the word *cultural* (the letter u was pronounced as /oo/; Turn 16). The teacher, instead of correcting the mistake, wrote on the board a word with a similar sound (the word *cut*) and asked the student to read it. Then, the teacher wrote the word *cultural* on the board, underlined the letter u, and asked the student to read it (Turn 19). She then showed to the student the similarity between the pronunciation of these two words by stressing the pronunciation of the sound /ʌ/. At this point, she also explicitly suggested remembering the pronunciation of the word *cut* as a strategy for correct pronunciation of words with the /ʌ/ sound (Turn 21). The student then practiced the pronunciation of the words exaggerating the key sound (Turn 22). Finally, the teacher wrote on the board a word with the same sound and asked another student to read it aloud; the student did so stressing the key sound (Turn 23–24).

Excerpt 4 presents a situation when students communicated a grammatical problem to the teacher (Turn 26–27). The teacher directed them at the correct answer by suggesting a strategy use (Turn 28).

Excerpt 4 (LLSI event 13)

26. S1: The price of gas rose by 5%? Rose?
 27. S2: Or has risen?
 28. T: Look at the structure of the sentences. Also, are there any words that suggest past simple or present perfect?
 29. S2: Present perfect
 30. T: Why?
 31. S3: There is nothing about the time. It doesn't say, for example, a year ago or so.

Regarding spelling, in LLSI event 21 (Excerpt 5), the teacher introduced two new words which were pronounced the same but spelt differently; the words *stationary* and *stationery*.

Excerpt 5 (LLSI event 21)

32. T: So the one with the letter a means not moving and the one with e means przybory biurowe [stationery]. How can you remember this difference?
 (...)
 33. T: This is how I remember it. The letter a is rather static; it looks to me rather static. The letter e is more like moving.
 34. S1: Hmm ... I'm not sure if it is going to work for me.
 35. S2: Maybe it can work. We will check in the next class when you do vocabulary test.
 36. S3: So a is not moving; and e is moving, so pens and pencils are moving. They are moving when we write.

In this event, the teacher explained the meaning of the words and asked students about strategies that would help them remember the difference in the spelling. As none of the students responded, the teacher presented to the class a strategy she used to memorize the spelling of these two words. She also underlined the letter e in the word *stationery*, draw an arrow under it, and moved her hand forward (Turn 33). Finally, the third student interpreted the strategy in her words and used the hand movement the teacher had made when presenting the strategy (Turn 36).

Excerpt 6 (LLSI event 1) is about teaching strategies for reading comprehension. The teacher introduced one CAE reading comprehension task and discussed its demand with students. Reading comprehension strategies were discussed collaboratively between the teacher and students twice, before and after doing the task. The pre-task discussion focused on investigating strategies already used by students for similar reading tasks (Turns 37–38), whereas the post-task discussion aimed at identifying difficulties in answering the questions about the text and evaluation of the strategies students used for this specific task (Turns 50–59).

Excerpt 6 (LLSI event 1)

37. T: This a typical CAE text. Have you ever seen such a reading task?
 38. S1: Yes, like in FCE.
 39. T: Yes, just the level of difficulty is higher. How did you find the FCE reading tasks?
 40. S1: It depends. Sometimes the questions were difficult. But in general it was OK.
 41. T: So, how would you approach this reading task?
 42. S2: Just reading the text and answer the questions?
 43. T: OK.
 44. S3: The question is whether to read the question first and then text (...) Sorry, no, first the text and then questions. I usually forget what was in the text.
 45. T: OK. This can be an issue. Will you then read the questions first?
 46. S3: I think so. I will try and see how it goes.
 47. S2: If I have a problem, I would consult it with my dear friend who is sitting here, but she is not here today.
 (T and students are laughing.)
 48. T: OK. Try to answer the questions.
 (...)
 49. T: Now, as all of you are done, check your answers with the person who is sitting next to you.
 (...)
 50. T: Did you encounter any problems?
 51. S4: Yes, I had a problem with answer for question 4, but I checked with [the name of a student], and her answer was correct.
 52. T: Did she tell you why she was right?
 53. S4: Yes. She showed me the answer in the text.
 54. T: OK! Any other issues? [the name of S3], did you read the text first or the questions?
 55. S3: Actually, I read the text first but I didn't pay attention too much. Then questions, but I had to read the text again, but only the part that ... I mean the part about the question.
 56. S2: I read the text first but I think it is not a bad idea to read questions first. Sometimes I am lost and coming back to the text takes time.
 57. T: OK. That's a good point.
 58. S5: I underlined my answers. In the exam, can we do it?
 59. S6: Me too. It's important.

4.3 Forms of LLSI

The LLSI events were analysed to identify types of interaction (Coyle, 2019), the degree of explicitness (Magnusson et al., 2019), the presence of the essential elements of LLSI (Rubin et al., 2007), and strategy category (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990).

4.3.1 Interaction

Most of the interaction within the LLSI was between the teacher and a student (T-S) and between the teacher and the whole class (T-W) – 24 incidents, 12 in each type. Nine happened between the teacher and a group of students (T-G), and four between students (S-S).

In CC1, the majority of interaction was the T-S (8; 40%) and T-W type (7; 35%); three were T-G (15%) and two S-S (10%). In CC2, most of the interaction was the T-G type (6; 55%); three were

T-S (27%), one T-W (9%), and one S-S (9%). In CC3, most of the interaction was the T-W type (4; 67%), one was T-S (16.5%) and one S-S (16.5%).

The T-W interaction concerned all LLSI about reading strategies, nine LLSI about vocabulary (45%), and one about spelling (25%). As to the T-S interaction, it concerned all the LLSI about pronunciation strategies, five about vocabulary strategies (25%), and three about grammar (60%). The T-G interaction concerned all LLSI about speaking strategies, three vocabulary LLSI (15%), two grammar (40%), and two spelling (50%), whereas the S-S interaction concerned three LLSI about vocabulary (15%) and one about spelling (25%).

4.3.2 Degree of explicitness

To measure the degree of explicitness of strategy instruction in each event, the Degree of Explicitness of Language Learning Strategy Instruction Scale (DELLSI Scale; Table 2) was developed based on the PLATO Rubric for the Strategy Use and Instruction Element (Magnusson et al., 2019: 194).

Table 2. The Degree of Explicitness of Language Learning Strategy Instruction scale (DELLSI scale)

Degree of explicit instruction (EI)	Meaning
1. little EI	Reference to a strategy without discussion of why or when to use it
2. limited EI	Introduction of a strategy or prompting the use of a strategy
3. some EI	Provision of explicit, but limited, instruction about a strategy, including the discussion of how to use it
4. strong EI	Provision of explicit and detailed instruction about a strategy, including how, and often why or when, to use it

Most of the events (18, 49%) were with some degree of explicitness (3 on the DELLSI Scale). Eleven of them concerned vocabulary strategies, three spelling, two grammar, one speaking, and one pronunciation strategy. Six of these events were the T-W interaction type, six T-G, four T-S, and two the S-S type.

Thirteen events (35%) were with a limited degree of explicit instruction (2 on the DELLSI Scale). Six of them concerned vocabulary, three were about grammar, one about pronunciation, speaking, spelling, and reading strategies. Five of them were the T-S interaction type, four T-W, three T-G, and one the S-S type.

Five events (13%) indicated strong explicit instruction (4 on the DELLSI Scale). Three of them concerned vocabulary, one was about pronunciation and one about reading strategies. Two of them were the T-S interaction type, two T-W, and one the S-S type.

Only one event (3%) was with little explicit instruction (1 on the DELLSI Scale). It was an event that concerned pronunciation, and it was the T-S interaction type.

The most explicit instruction was provided in CC1 with the mean of 2.8 (the mean in CC2 was 2.7, and in CC3 2.5); however, there were no significant between-phase differences ($p = .690$; one-way ANOVA).

The most explicit instruction was for reading strategies, with the mean of 3; for vocabulary, it was 2.85, for spelling 2.75, for pronunciation and speaking it was 2.5, and for grammar 2.4. However, the differences among language skills were insignificant ($p = .812$; one-way ANOVA).

As to the degree of explicitness and the type of interaction, the most explicit one was in the S-S type, with the mean of 3. The mean for the T-W type was 2.83, for T-G 2.66, and for T-S it was 2.58. Again, the differences among the types of interaction were insignificant ($p = .738$; one-way ANOVA).

4.3.3 Essential elements of LLSI

All four essential elements of LLSI (Rubin et al., 2007) were present in ten LLSI events (27%), including 75% of all the LLSI that concerned pronunciation strategies (3), 50% of spelling (2), 20% of grammar (2), and 20% of vocabulary strategies (4).

The presentation and modelling of a strategy were present in 34 events (92%), the identification of strategies and practice opportunities in 26 events (70%), whereas self-evaluation and transfer in only 15 events (40.5%).

The identification of strategies was present in all events that concerned reading (2) and speaking (2), in 75% about spelling (3) and pronunciation (3), in 70% regarding vocabulary, and only in 40% of the events that were about grammar strategies (2). It was present in ten events that were the T-W interaction type (83%), in 67% of T-S and T-G (8 and 6, respectively), and two S-S type (50%).

The presentation and modelling of a strategy was present in all events that concerned grammar (5), pronunciation (4), speaking (2), and spelling strategies (4). It was present in 18 vocabulary strategies events (90%), and in one event about reading strategies (50%). This element was present in all events that were the T-S and S-S interaction type; in 92% of the events with the T-W type (11), and in seven with the T-G type (78%).

Practice opportunities were in all events concerning grammar (5), pronunciation (4), and reading strategies (2); in 60% of the events about vocabulary strategies (12), and 50% in spelling strategies events (2). This element was present in ten T-S interaction type and ten T-W (83%); in five events of the T-G type (55%), in one S-S event (25%).

The self-evaluation and transfer element was present in 75% of the events concerning pronunciation (3), 50% about reading and spelling (2), 40% about grammar (2), and 35% about vocabulary strategies (7). This element was present in 44% of the events of the T-G type (4); in 42% of the T-S and T-W type (5 and 5, respectively), and only one S-S event (25%).

There was also a positive correlation between the aggregate number of the essential elements present in each event and the degree of explicitness of each event; however, the relation was weak and insignificant ($r = .20$, $n = 37$, $p = .246$).

4.3.4 Strategy category

One hundred and twelve strategies were identified in the LLSI events. Most of them were cognitive strategies (87, 78%); most of these were instructed by the teacher (52, 59%). There were 18 metacognitive strategies (16%), and most of them were expressed by students (16, 89%). Seven were social strategies (6%), and most of them were expressed by students (6, 86%). Affective strategies in the context of strategy instruction were not identified.

Examples of cognitive strategies can be found in Excerpt 1, 3, and 5 above (Turn 5, 21, 33, and 36, respectively). Metacognitive strategies are presented, for example, in Excerpt 1 and 2 above (Turn 6 and 8, respectively), and social strategies in Excerpt 1 and 2 (Turn 7 and 13, respectively).

4.4 Effects of LLSI

Five episodes were identified that indicated the effect of LLSI in teaching pronunciation, spelling, reading comprehension, and vocabulary strategies. The effect of seven LLSI events (1, 2, 6, 16, 19, 21, 33) was evidenced in these episodes. For example, Episode 1 that happened in lesson 12 illustrates the effect of LLSI event 16 that occurred in lesson 10.

Episode 1:

60. T: How was your weekend?
 61. S1: I was in the mountains with my family, just for a few days. We went skiing.
 62. S2: No /maunteɪn/ but /tʌn/, /'maʊntɪn/, almost like in /'sɔ:tən/.
 63. T: Yes, /'maʊntɪn/. I am glad that you remember what we learned some time ago!

In lesson 10 (LLSI event 16), the teacher presented strategies for the correct pronunciation of the word *mountain*. In lesson 12, one of the students mispronounced the word (Turn 61) and another student corrected him using the strategies he had learned in lesson 10, that is sounding out the final sound of the word exaggeratedly and comparing it with the similarly pronounced final sound of another word. The effect of this LLSI is that the student remembered the strategy, used it to pronounce correctly the particular word, and instructed another student in the class (Turn 62).

In Episode 2, which happened in lesson 13, the effect of LLSI event 21 that occurred in lesson 12 and concerned spelling strategies for the words *stationary* and *stationery*, as shown in Excerpt 5 above.

Episode 2:

64. S1: I actually thought about the letter, which is moving or which is not.
 65. S2: Actually, this is what you said last time.
 66. T: Ok. I'm glad this strategy worked.
 67. S3: I remember the hand move and moving pencils.

In this episode, the students were asked to spell the two words. The teacher went around the classroom to check whether the students had spelt the words correctly. A group of students told the teacher what they did to spell them correctly (Turn 64 and 67). It shows that students used the strategy taught and practised in the previous lesson (Excerpt 5, Turn 33 and 36).

Episode 3 below shows the effect of LLSI 19 and 33 that happened in Lesson 10 and 19, respectively. In Lesson 24, students were practising a CAE use of English multiple-choice task, in which they had to fill in a gap with a word that they had to choose out of four options. Such a task type had been practised a few times and strategies for completing it had been discussed on the classroom forum. Here, one of the students is uncertain about her answer (Turn 68). Another student faced all the students in the classroom and suggested using the strategy of referring to the mother tongue and translating (Turn 69), which was previously introduced by the teacher. Consequently, the student came up with the correct answer (Turn 70).

Episode 3:

68. S1: Edge of the globe?
 69. S2: Don't give up on Polish. You can use Polish here. It is like in Polish – zakątek.
 70. S1: Corner of the globe?

Another effect of LLSI was observed when students were doing a similar task. In Episode 4, which happened in Lesson 14, the teacher, when checking the task completion with individual students, noticed that a student had chosen an incorrect word and offered her assistance. The student, in response, identified the problem on her own and solved it by referring to the strategy that had been introduced in Lesson 4 (LLSI 2).

Episode 4:

71. T: [Name of the student], are you OK with gap number 5? Do you need help with it?
 72. S: Actually no. I know why I made a mistake. I didn't check the beginning of the sentence and the word that is before the gap.

Finally, Episode 5 in Lesson 12 indicates the effect of the instruction on reading comprehension strategies. The teacher checked whether students had encountered any problems while doing a reading comprehension task. One of the students, in response, commented on the effectiveness of the strategy that had been discussed in Lesson 2 (LLSI event 1) and Lesson 6 (LLSI event 6).

Episode 5:

73. T: Any issues with this task?
 74. S: I actually read the questions first and then the text. This is what we ^[1]_{SEP} discussed some time ago, when we were doing similar task. It is a good idea. I was more focused when reading the text.

Three of the events (16, 21, 33) included all four essential elements of the LLSI. Three of them (1, 2, 6) included three essential elements (the identification, presentation/modelling, and practice); one event (19) contained only two elements (presentation/modelling and practice). The degree of explicitness in most of these events was high (either 3 or 4 on the DELLSI Scale); LLSI event 1 and 2 were strongly explicit, whereas events 19, 21, 33 were with some degree of explicitness. Two events (6 and 16) were with limited explicit instruction (2 on the DELLSI Scale). Regarding the type of interaction, most of the events were the interaction between the teacher and the whole class (T-W; events 1, 2, 6, 19, 21); event 16 was the interaction between the teacher and a student (T-S), and event 33 between students (S-S).

5 Discussion

Findings of the present study provide evidence of naturally occurring LLSI in an adult EFL classroom. It involved different types of interaction, both teacher- and student-led (Coyle, 2019), but mainly the former one (89% of all LLSI). The teacher provided strategy instruction about different language skills to the whole class, a group of students, and individual students to almost equal extent (32.5%, 24%, 32.5%, respectively), which appears to be an appropriate interaction form for adult learners (Rubin et al., 2007). It is worth noting that on the individual level, the instruction mainly concerned teaching strategies for grammar and pronunciation, whereas on the whole class level it was about teaching reading and vocabulary strategies.

The teacher's role was most prominent in teaching cognitive strategies (Macaro, 2001), whereas metacognitive and social strategies were promoted by the teacher only in a small percentage, which corroborates the previous findings to some extent (Plonsky, 2011, 2019; Psaltou-Joycey et al., 2017, 2018). Students' dominant role in promoting metacognitive and social strategies may be related to their level of independence and self-regulation. This finding also suggests that these two categories of strategies are more generic in nature rather than L2-specific, and therefore, the teacher's role in teaching them is less important (Macaro, 2001).

However, LLSI in this study was not frequent as it constituted only 5.5% of the entire corpus, and it was explicit only to some degree. The strategy instruction was mainly limited to the provision of information on how to use a strategy. The strong explicit instruction, that is detailed instruction with a discussion of how, why and when to use a strategy (4 on the DELLSI Scale; Table 2), was evidenced in only 13% of the LLSI events. The degree of explicitness also differed depending on the phase of the course, being the strongest in the initial phase (CC1). This may suggest that the more explicit instruction laid grounds for language performance and practice in the further part of the course. To support this statement, the instruction was significantly more frequent in the initial phase of the course (the difference between the initial and the middle phase was 24 percentage points and 38 between the initial and the final phase), and the LLSI events that occurred and the one that could have occurred in the course were inversely proportional. Also, it can be assumed that strategy instruction could have been more frequent and more explicit; however, it needs to be considered that developing strategic behaviour in language learners is dynamic in nature and there is no clear cut between the explicit and implicit strategy instruction (Coyle, 2019).

This dynamism was also revealed in the presence of essential elements of strategy instruction (Rubin et al., 2007). Only 27% of LLSI events contained all four elements and there were mainly the pronunciation strategies (75% of these strategies). Also, the identification of the strategies students are already using, the presentation and modelling of strategies, as well as practice opportunities, were an important part of the instruction. These elements were present in 70%, 92%, and 70% of LLSI events, respectively. Self-evaluation and transfer were present in only 40.5% of the events, which may be worrying given its pivotal role in developing students' metacognitive awareness and responsibility for learning (Chamot, 2009). Yet, it needs to be considered that only three out of seven

LLSI events (43%) that evidenced the effect of strategy instruction involved the element of self-evaluation and transfer. The effect of the twelve other LLSI events that contained the self-evaluation and transfer element was not evidenced; on the other hand, all the events that evidenced effect contained the elements of presentation and modelling and practice opportunities, and most of them were the interaction between the teacher and the whole class (71.5%).

It is, however, worrying that listening comprehension and essay writing strategies were not taught whatsoever; there were ten situations in which LLSI could have been provided for the former and four for the latter. Considering the listening situations, many students communicated a lack of understanding the recording and being unable to answer correctly most of the questions; however, the teacher only provided the class with the correct answer. On the one hand, these data may suggest that the teacher found teaching listening strategies challenging, for example, due to limited understanding of what teaching listening skills involve since the processes that learners engage cannot be easily observed (Goh, 2014). On the other hand, the listening situations in this study did not consider CAE tasks, likewise most of the tasks for other language skills; therefore, the teacher might not see the need for teaching listening strategies for the provided listening material, which was mainly listening to current radio and TV news. In this regard, it also needs to be considered that LLSI research reviews reported a rather insignificant effect of teaching listening strategies compared with teaching strategies for other language skills (Hassan et al., 2005; Plonsky, 2011, 2019).

Further on language skills, instruction for vocabulary strategies was dominant and involved many different contexts of vocabulary learning and use. Undoubtedly, the instruction for vocabulary strategies was dictated by the purpose of the course, which was a pre-preparatory course for the CAE exam in which vocabulary knowledge is tested to a great extent, but the data also indicate that the learning needs of adult learners at a proficient level may require teaching effective vocabulary strategies for memorisation. This was shown in Excerpt 1, which reports a talk between two students about strategies for memorizing longer and more complex vocabulary.

6 Conclusion

This study attempted to contribute to a deeper understanding of the practical application of L2 strategy instruction in an adult EFL classroom. Findings revealed that strategy instruction in an adult EFL classroom happened naturally, taking different forms, considering different language skills and strategy categories. It was also highly interactive, context- and problem-related (Rubin et al., 2007). However, the setting of this study determines its limitations and broader application. Undoubtedly, more naturalistic observation of strategy instruction is needed in various L2 classroom settings, involving students of different ages, with different language proficiency, and with the use of audio- and video-recording. Future studies may also involve observing strategy instructional practices of L2 teachers who have and who have not received training on teaching language learning strategies, or observing teachers' instructional practices pre- and post-training to examine the effect of specific teacher training.

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