

# Language Strategy Use Inventory

Andrew D. Cohen, Rebecca L. Oxford, and Julie C. Chi

The purpose of this inventory is to find out more about yourself as a language learner and to help you discover strategies that can help you master a new language. Check the box that describes your use of each listed strategy. The categories are: *I use this strategy and like it; I have tried this strategy and would use it again; I've never used this strategy but am interested in it; and This strategy doesn't fit for me.*

## Listening Strategy Use

### Strategies to increase my exposure to the target language:

- |  | I use this strategy<br>and like it | I have tried this strategy<br>and would use it again | I've never used this strategy<br>but am interested in it | This strategy<br>doesn't fit for me |
|--|------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Attend out-of-class events where the new language is spoken.  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 2. Listen to talk shows on the radio, watch TV shows, or see movies in the target language.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 3. Listen to the language in a restaurant or store where the staff speak the target language.                                | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 4. Listen in on people who are having conversations in the target language to try to catch the gist of what they are saying. | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

### Strategies to become more familiar with the sounds in the target language:

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5. Practice sounds in the target language that are very different from sounds in my own language to become comfortable with them. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Look for associations between the sound of a word or phrase in the new language with the sound of a familiar word.             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Imitate the way native speakers talk.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Ask a native speaker about unfamiliar sounds that I hear.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Strategies to prepare to listen to conversation in the target language:

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 9. Pay special attention to specific aspects of the language (e.g., the way the speaker pronounces certain sounds).        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Try to predict what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Prepare for talks and performances I will hear in the target language by reading some background materials beforehand. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Strategies to listen to conversation in the target language:

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 12. Listen for key words that seem to carry the bulk of the meaning.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Listen for word and sentence stress to see what native speakers emphasize when they speak. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Pay attention to when and how long people tend to pause.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Pay attention to the rise and fall of speech by native speakers—the “music” of it.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- |  | I use this strategy and like it | I have tried this strategy and would use it again | I've never used this strategy but am interested in it | This strategy doesn't fit for me |
|--|---------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 16. Practice "skim listening" by paying attention to some parts and ignoring others. | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 17. Try to understand what I hear without translating it word-for-word.              | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 18. Focus on the context of what people are saying.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 19. Listen for specific details to see whether I can understand them.                | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |

**Strategies for when I do not understand some or most of what someone says in the target language:**

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 20. Ask speakers to repeat what they said if it wasn't clear to me.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. Ask speakers to slow down if they are speaking too fast.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. Ask for clarification if I don't understand it the first time around.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. Use the speakers' tone of voice as a clue to the meaning of what they are saying.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. Make educated guesses about the topic based on what has already been said.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. Draw on my general background knowledge to get the main idea.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. Watch speakers' gestures and general body language to help me figure out the meaning of what they are saying. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*What other listening strategies do I use?*

## Vocabulary Strategy Use

### Strategies to learn new words:

- |  | I use this strategy and like it | I have tried this strategy and would use it again | I've never used this strategy but am interested in it | This strategy doesn't fit for me |
|--|---------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 27. Pay attention to the structure of the new word.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 28. Break the word into parts that I can identify.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 29. Group words according to parts of speech (e.g., nouns, verbs).                       | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 30. Associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a word that is familiar to me. | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 31. Use rhyming to remember new words.   | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 32. Make a mental image of new words.  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 33. List new words with other words that are related to it.                              | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 34. Write out new words in meaningful sentences.   | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 35. Practice new action verbs by acting them out.  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 36. Use flash cards in a systematic way to learn new words.                              | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |

### Strategies to review vocabulary:

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 37. Go over new words often when I first learn them to help me remember them. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 38. Review words periodically so I don't forget them.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Strategies to recall vocabulary:

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 39. Look at meaningful parts of the word (e.g., the prefix or the suffix) to remind me of the meaning of the word.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 40. Make an effort to remember the situation where I first heard or saw the word or remember the page or sign where I saw it written. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41. Visualize the spelling of new words in my mind.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Strategies to make use of new vocabulary:

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 42. Try using new words in a variety of ways.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 43. Practice using familiar words in different ways.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 44. Make an effort to use idiomatic expressions in the new language. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*What other vocabulary strategies do I use?*

## Speaking Strategy Use

### Strategies to practice speaking:

- |   | I use this strategy<br>and like it | I have tried this strategy<br>and would use it again | I've never used this strategy<br>but am interested in it | This strategy<br>doesn't fit for me |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| 45. Practice saying new expressions to myself.  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 46. Practice new grammatical structures in different situations to build my confidence level in using them. | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 47. Think about how a native speaker might say something and practice saying it that way.                   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

### Strategies to engage in conversations:

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 48. Regularly seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 49. Initiate conversations in the target language as often as possible.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 50. Direct the conversation to familiar topics.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 51. Plan out in advance what I want to say.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 52. Ask questions as a way to be involved in the conversation.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 53. Anticipate what will be said based on what has been said so far.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 54. Try topics even when they aren't familiar to me.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 55. Encourage others to correct errors in my speaking.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 56. Try to figure out and model native speakers' language patterns when requesting, apologizing, or complaining. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Strategies for when I can't think of a word or expression:

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 57. Ask for help from my conversational partner.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 58. Look for a different way to express the idea, like using a synonym.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 59. Use words from my own language, but say it in a way that sounds like words in the target language.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 60. Make up new words or guess if I don't know the right ones to use.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 61. Use gestures as a way to try and get my meaning across.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 62. Switch back to my own language momentarily if I know that the person I'm talking to can understand what is being said. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*What other speaking strategies do I use?*

## Reading Strategy Use

### Strategies to improve my reading ability:

- |  | I use this strategy and like it | I have tried this strategy and would use it again | I've never used this strategy but am interested in it | This strategy doesn't fit for me |
|--|---------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 63. Read as much as possible in the target language.   | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 64. Try to find things to read for pleasure in the target language.  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 65. Find reading material that is at or near my level.   | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 66. Plan out in advance how I'm going to read the text, monitor to see how I'm doing, and then check to see how much I understand. | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 67. Skim an academic text first to get the main idea and then go back and read it more carefully.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 68. Read a story or dialogue several times until I understand it.  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 69. Pay attention to the organization of the text, especially headings and subheadings.  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 70. Make ongoing summaries of the reading either in my mind or in the margins of the text.   | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 71. Make predictions as to what will happen next.  | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |

### Strategies for when words and grammatical structures are not understood:

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 72. Guess the approximate meaning by using clues from the context of the reading material. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 73. Use a dictionary to get a detailed sense of what individual words mean.                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*What other reading strategies do I use?*

## Writing Strategy Use

### Strategies for basic writing:

75. Practice writing the alphabet and/or new words in the target language.
76. Plan out in advance how to write academic papers, monitor how my writing is going, and check to see how well my writing reflects what I want to say.
77. Try writing different kinds of texts in the target language (e.g., personal notes, messages, letters, and course papers).
78. Take class notes in the target language as much as I'm able.

I use this strategy and like it

I have tried this strategy and would use it again

I've never used this strategy but am interested in it

This strategy doesn't fit for me

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Strategies for writing an essay or academic paper:

79. Find a different way to express the idea when I don't know the correct expression (e.g., use a synonym or describe the idea).
80. Review what I have already written before continuing to write more.
81. Use reference materials such as a glossary, a dictionary, or a thesaurus to help find or verify words in the target language.
82. Wait to edit my writing until all my ideas are down on paper.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Strategies to use after writing a draft of an essay or paper:

83. Revise my writing once or twice to improve the language and content.
84. Try to get feedback from others, especially native speakers of the language.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*For more information on writing strategies, see pages 223-230 in the Students' Guide.*

## ***Translation Strategy Use***

### **Strategies for translation:**

- |  | I use this strategy and like it | I have tried this strategy and would use it again | I've never used this strategy but am interested in it | This strategy doesn't fit for me |
|--|---------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 85. Plan out what to say or write in my own language and then translate it into the target language. | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 86. Translate in my head while I am reading to help me understand the text.                          | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| 87. Translate parts of a conversation into my own language to help me remember the conversation.     | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>         |

### **Strategies for working directly in the target language as much as possible:**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 88. Put my own language out of mind and think only in the target language as much as possible.               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 89. Try to understand what has been heard or read without translating it word-for-word into my own language. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 90. Use caution when directly transferring words and ideas from my own language into the target language.    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*For more information on translation strategies, see pages 231-234 in the Students' Guide.*