

RESEARCHING LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND SOURCES OF REGULATION: TWO METHODOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS



THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2023

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ZOOM

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Abstract:

The field of language learning strategies is dominated by research that prioritizes large-scale studies on the strategies that learners report using and the relationships between learners' reported strategy use and other variables. Without faulting this informative body of work, I will introduce two methodological innovations that I have developed through my own research on theory building in this area. The first method, Narrative Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (NIPA), draws on narrative and phenomenological psychology to research the experience of strategic behavior (i.e., what it is like). The second method, Psychological Process Tracing (PPT), draws on methodological work in political and cognitive science to unpack potentially causal parts of a mechanism that link the triggers of strategic behavior to its outcomes (i.e., how does it happen). Both methods prioritize in-depth investigations of a small number of cases yet embrace very different views on the nature of reality and how we can research it.

Bio:

Nathan Thomas is a Lecturer in TESOL at the IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society, and a Teaching Fellow in Applied Linguistics at the University of Oxford. Prior to his current roles, he taught English for academic purposes in the UK and spent ten years teaching in China and Thailand. This practical experience guides his scholarly work.

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