Profile of a successful language learner

- According to Rubin (1975) good L2 learners are:
  - willing and accurate guessers
  - have a strong drive to communicate
  - are often uninhibited
  - are willing to make mistakes
  - focus on form by looking for patterns and analyzing
  - take advantage of all practice opportunities
  - monitor their speech as well as that of others
  - pay attention to meaning
L2 strategies for oral fluency

Risk-taking/Word Coinage
- Trying a word based on assumptions regarding the L1 rules of word-formation rather than giving up and saying “I don’t how to say that”. The result may or may not be an existing L2 item. (e.g. - grand grand père)

Paraphrasing
- Repeating back what one has heard in a shorter (sometimes humorous) way in order to check comprehension (e.g. - The teacher was most dissatisfied with the performance of the pupils on the assessment. “So what you’re saying is that she thought the test results were bad” 😊)

Circumlocution
- Offering a definition or description of the target item (e.g. ‘What bikers wear on their heads' for ‘crash helmet'). Alternatively the negation of an item/phrase of converse meaning can be used e.g. ‘not light’ for ‘heavy').
L2 strategies for oral fluency

Restructuring
- The learner realizes that he/she is unable to finish his/her utterance as it was initially intended and tries again using more manageable means (structure/lexis-wise) without abandoning his/her communicative goal. (e.g. – “Let’s see, it’s about 5 years now for me in Lyon”, rather than saying the more complicated form using the present perfect progressive, “I have been living in Lyon for 5 years”)

Substitution
- Using an L2 lexical item the learner know or can recall instead of the ‘target' item the learner does not know or cannot recall. (e.g. ‘animal' for ‘giraffe'), or an item of similar meaning is used (e.g. ‘table' for ‘desk').

Self-Monitoring/Correction/Evaluation
- This is when the learner says something in the L2 but then immediately realizes that they have made an error and corrects themselves, or can hear that what they said is not quite right and will express this and ask for help.
Factors that can influence language learning

Motivation
- More motivated students tend to use more strategies than less motivated students, and the particular reason for studying the language (motivational orientation, especially as related to career field) is important.

Gender
- Females reported greater overall strategy use than males in many studies.

Cultural background
- Rote memorization and other forms of memorization were more prevalent among some Asian students than among students from other cultural backgrounds. Certain other cultures also appeared to encourage this strategy among learners.

Attitudes and beliefs
- These were reported to have a profound effect on the strategies learners choose, with negative attitudes and beliefs often causing poor strategy use or lack of orchestration of strategies.
Factors that can influence language learning

- **Age and L2 stage**
  - Students of different ages and stages of L2 learning used different strategies, with certain strategies often being employed by older or more advanced students.

- **Learning style**
  - Learning style often determined the choice of L2 learning strategies. For example, analytic-style students preferred strategies such as contrastive analysis, rule-learning, and dissecting words and phrases, while global students used strategies to find meaning (guessing, scanning, predicting) and conversing without knowing all the words (paraphrasing, gesturing).

- **Tolerance of ambiguity**
  - Students who were more tolerant of ambiguity used significantly different learning strategies in some instances than did students who were less tolerant of ambiguity.