Exploring Gender Effects on Language Learning Strategies

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ABSTRACT: The present study investigated the frequency with which Iranian university students majoring in English translating use language learning strategies, with the consideration of gender variable. The subjects of this study were 50 juniors of Islamic Azad Shiraz University, 15 males and 35 females. The strategy use was assessed through a Persian translation of a self-reporting questionnaire called the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford 1990). The results of this study showed that Iranian University students used language learning strategies almost moderately, with the most frequent use of metacognitive strategies. Males showed more frequent use of all strategy categories in all the six categories except social categories that both males and females had equal frequencies.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades in the field of second language education a gradual but significant shift has taken place, resulting in less emphasis on teachers and teaching and greater stress on learners and learning. This change started in the early 1970's when the individualization of instruction and emphasis on learner autonomy took momentum in the field of SL/FL teaching. Accordingly, language teaching research shifted its focus away from different teaching methodologies and made the learner the center of its attention (Reiss, 1985). Researchers recognized that it was insufficient to deal with language education without taking the learners into consideration. They recognized that learners’ ability should be taken into account to set the learning goals and to help them recognize their learning ability. Long (1995) endorsed that second language teaching in recent years has moved away from the quest for whom the perfect teaching method, focusing instead on how successful teachers and learners actually achieve their goals. In the case of learners, it has led to the study of (1) how learners approach learning, both in and out of classrooms, and (2) the kinds of strategies and cognitive processing they use in second language acquisition (ascited in O’Malley and Chamot, 1995).

In this regard, Oxford (1990a, p.5) stated that "there must be a shift from the product or outcome of language learning and acquisition to an expanded focus that also includes how students gain language-the process by which learning or acquisition occurs." As such LLSs have come to play a central role in this process because as Benson and Voller (1997) suggested, learning strategies are the technical version of autonomy where the focus is on passing on to the learner the technical ability to learn on their own. That is why ever since LLSs have comprised an inseparable component of various models of language proficiency and language learning.

Objectives and significance of the study

Since the pioneering work carried out in the mid-seventies (e.g. by Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975), there has been an awareness that language learning strategies have the potential to be an extremely powerful learning tool (O’Malley et al., 1985a, p. 43). In spite of this awareness, and in spite of much useful and interesting work having been carried out in the intervening years (nearly a quarter of a century), the language learning strategy field still has the potential to the worked on in different contexts such as an EFL context like Iran.

Research questions

1. To what extant second language learners use FL learning strategies?
2. Are the scales of “Strategy Inventory for Language Learning” correlated with each other?
3. Is there a statistically significant gender difference in students’ FL learning strategy use?

**Literature Review**

In the early 1970s with the arrival of individualizing instruction and language teaching, research shifted its focus away from different teaching methodologies and made the learner the centre of its attention (Reiss, 1985). Since then researchers have examined students’ personality, characteristics, learning and cognitive styles, and the specific strategies employed by effective or ineffective learners.

Most of the early studies of language learning strategies focused on the general approach and specific actions/techniques that the 'good' language learner used to improve his progress in developing L2 skills (e.g., Rubin, 1975, 1981; Stern, 1975; Brown, 1994; Chamot and Kupper, 1989). Other studies have examined the interaction between the learning strategies and various learner characteristics (e.g., language aptitude, personality traits, learning style, cognitive style, attitudes and motivation) of groups of both good and poor language learners (e.g., Hosenfeld, 1976; Naiman et al., 1978; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990).

Researchers such as Oxford (1990a), Cohen (1987), and O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have stressed that effective learners use a variety of different strategies and techniques in order to solve problems that they face while acquiring or producing the language. Other researchers in the area of learning strategies have also found positive results. Many researchers such as Graham, Harris, Macarthur, and Schwartzhave validated strategies for improving the quality of student compositions, planning processes, and revisions.

According to several studies the students’ gender makes a significant difference in learning a second or foreign language (Oxford et al., 1989; Ehrman and Oxford, 1989; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989; Oxford et al., 1993; Oxford and Ehrman, 1995). All studies, which examined sex as a variable in the use of language learning strategies reported that significant sex differences almost always occurred in a single direction, showing greater use of language learning strategies by females. Ehrman and Oxford (1989), using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), with both students and instructors at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute stated that compared with males, females made significantly greater use of language learning strategies in four areas: general study strategies, functional practice strategies, strategies for searching for and communication meaning, and self-management strategies. In another study Oxford and Nyikos (1989) found similar results in the study of 1,200 university students. Their study suggests that female learners use formal rule-related practice strategies, general study strategies and conversational input elicitation strategies more frequently than do male learners. Their study also provides many insights about variables influencing the choice of learning strategies by foreign language students in a conventional classroom setting. They demonstrated the powerful effects of motivation, sex, ways of study, and other variables on the choice of language learning strategies. But unfortunately as they indicated too many other potentially interesting gender differences either have not been explored or have not been reported. Due to the lack of study in this field, Oxford et al. (1993) found a wide range of sex differences in strategy use; especially frequency and variety of strategy use, and also the greater use of strategies for women. In fact in their study of factors affecting Japanese language achievement of high school students who were enrolled in the Japanese Satellite Program (JSP) in the USA, they found that girls showed a number of differences from boys in terms of motivation, achievement, and frequency of strategy use”.

Furthermore Findings of the study by Ehrman and Oxford (1989) fully support results from other studies concerning the effect of sex differences on second language learning. The question arises whether other variables, in addition to psychological type, play a role in these sex differences. They suggest that such variables might include female superiority in verbal aptitude and social orientation, as well as possible sex differences in integrative (socially based) motivation. In another study by Oxford and Green (1995), it has been reported that there exists greater use of learning strategies among more successful learners and higher levels of strategy use by women than by men. In his study Ok (2003) reported the moderate frequency of strategy use by all students; and the most frequent use of compensation strategies and least of affective strategies. In general, girls showed more frequent use of all six strategy categories than boys. In short, most of the prior research indicates that there exist significant differences between males and females in the use of strategies, with women's overall dominance in frequency and range of the strategies. However Bacon's (1992) findings are rather in contrary with that of others. In his study on the relationships between gender and the use of processing strategies he came to the conclusion that men and women adjust their strategies differently to the difficulty of the passages. In other words, men and women judge their level of comprehension differently and generally men are more confident than women in the use of language learning strategies, when they are exposed to authentic material.
Research has shown that gender is the factor that has been explored by many researchers. In many EFL strategy frequency studies involving gender, the results have usually favored females as more frequent users of strategies (e.g. Green, 1992; Noguchi, 1991; Green and Oxford, 1993; Oxford, 1993).

From these researches to date, it is evident that all language learners use language learning strategies of some kind; however, the frequency and variety of use vary between different learners and depend on a number of variables (Chamot and Kupper, 1989).

On the whole studies which have examined the relationship between sex and strategy use have come to mixed conclusions. Ehrman and Oxford (1989) and Oxford and Nyikos (1989) discovered distinct gender differences in strategy use. The study by Green and Oxford (1995) came to the same conclusion. Ehrman and Oxford's (1990) study, however, failed to discover any evidence of differing learning strategy use between the sexes. It might be concluded, perhaps, that, although men and women do not always demonstrate differences in language-learning strategy use, where differences are found, women tend to use more language-learning strategies than men.

**Definitions of LLSs**

Rubin (1975: 43) one of the earliest researchers in this area, provided a very broad definition of learning strategies as “the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge.”

Regarding the earliest models of language-learning Bialystok (1978) offered a model in which language learning strategies have a key role and are related to other aspects of learning directly or indirectly. In this model, LLSs are defined as “operational means for exploiting information to improve competence in a second language.”

Rigney (1978, as reported in O’Malley, Chamot, Manzanares, Kupper, and Russo, 1985) described learning strategies as any sets of operations or steps used by a learner that will facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval, or use of information.

When O’Malley et al. (1985a) came to conduct their research, they used the definition of learning strategies as being “operations or steps used by a learner that will facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval, or use of information.” (p. 23), a definition originally used by Rigney (1978).

Like O’Malley et al. (1985a, 1985b), Oxford (1990) used Rigney’s definition of language-learning strategies as “operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and the use of information” (Oxford, 1990, p. 8) as a base.

More recent definitions of LLSs reflect a greater emphasis on the effects of LLSs on the processes of language-learning than on language-learning as a product (Oxford, 1992, 1993; Cohen, 1998). The definition of LLSs adopted in this study is that of Oxford (1992, 1993). She defines LLSs as “specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills.” These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. She conceptualizes LLSs as multifaceted process-oriented tools that facilitate language learning and are of significance not just for autonomous learning but also for the achievement of communicative competence.

**Classifications of LLSs**

Language-learning strategies, although still controversially defined and classified, are increasingly attracting the interest of contemporary educators because of their potential to enhance learning. One of the earliest researchers in this field is Rubin. In 1981 (pp. 124-126) she identified two kinds of learning strategies: those which contribute directly to learning, and those which contribute indirectly to learning. The direct learning strategies she divided into six types (clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing, deductive reasoning, practice), and the indirect learning strategies she divided into two types (creating opportunities for practice, production tricks). Under production tricks, Rubin included communication strategies.

Tarone (1980) takes a different point of view. She suggests that by helping the students to say what they want or need to say, communications strategies can help to expand the language. Even if the communication is not perfect in grammatical or lexical terms, in the process of using the language for communication the learner will be exposed to language input which may result in learning and which, therefore, may be considered a learning strategy. The key point in this argument would seem to be that in order to be considered a learning strategy rather than a communication strategy, the basic motivation is not to communicate but to learn' (Tarone, 1980, p. 419).

Ellis (1985), too, considers an important role for language-learning strategies in his model of second language acquisition. He believes LLSs are one of the three processes along with production and communication strategies. Communication strategies, as an aspect of language-learning strategies, constitute a part of strategic competence, which itself is a component of communicative competence. In 1986 he views strategies from another dimension. He states that there are strategies for learning and strategies for using, including
communications strategies or “devices for compensating for inadequate resources” (p. 165), as quite different manifestations of the more general phenomenon which he calls learner strategies. Ellis (1994, p. 530) also concedes that there is “no easy way of telling whether a strategy is motivated by a desire to learn or a desire to communicate”.

Working at much the same time as Rubin in the mid-seventies, Stern (1975) produced a list of ten language-learning strategies which he believed to be characteristic of good language learners. At the top of the list, he put “Personal earning style” (p. 311). Stern later defined “strategies” as “broadly conceived intentional directions” (1992, p. 261), which is more similar to the definition of the term styles as used by other writers such as Willing and Nunan (1991).

In an attempt to produce a classification scheme with mutually exclusive categories, O’Malley and his colleagues to developed a taxonomy of their own identifying 26 strategies which they divided into three categories: metacognitive (knowing about learning), cognitive (specific to distinct learning activities) and social. Researchers have differently classified learning strategies but one classification which is based on Anderson’s theory of information processing is the one resented by O’Malley and Chamot (1990).

O’Malley and Chamot identify three categories of language learning strategies, i.e. metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective learning strategies. Metacognitive strategies are “higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring or evaluating the success of a learning activity” (p. 44). The metacognitive learning strategies identified by O’Malley and Chamot and their definitions are as follows:
1. Planning: previewing the main ideas and concepts of the material to be learnt, often by skimming the text for the organizing principle.
2. Directed attention: deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and to ignore irrelevant distracters.
3. Functional planning: planning for and rehearsing linguistic components necessary to carry out an upcoming language task.
4. Selective attention: deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of input; often by scanning for key words, concepts and/or linguistic markers.
5. Self-management: understanding the conditions that help one learn and arranging for the presence of these conditions.
6. Monitoring: checking one’s comprehension during listening or reading and checking the accuracy and/or appropriateness of one’s oral or written production while it is taking place.
7. Self-evaluation: checking the outcomes of one’s own language learning against a standard after it has been completed (p. 37)

Cognitive strategies are “more directly related to individual learning tasks and entail direct manipulation or transformation of the learning material” (p. 8). The cognitive strategies identified by O’Malley and Chamot and their definitions are as follows:

**Resourcing**  
Using target language reference materials such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, or textbooks.

**Repetition**  
Imitating a language model, including overt practice and silent rehearsal.

**Grouping**  
Classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their attributes or meaning.

**Deduction**  
Applying rules to understand or produce the second language or making up rules based on language analysis.

**Imagery**  
Using visual images (either mental or actual) to understand or remember new information.

**Auditory representation**  
Planning back in one’s mind the sound of a word, phrase, or longer language sequence.

**Keyword method**  
Remembering a new word in the second language by: (a) identifying a familiar word in the first language that sounds like or otherwise resembles the new word and (b) generating easily recalled images of some relationship with the first language homonyms and the new word in the second language.
Elaboration
Relating new information to prior knowledge, relating different parts of new information to each other or making meaningful personal associations with the new information.

Transfer
Using previous linguistic knowledge or prior skills to assist comprehension or production.

Differenting
Using available information to guess the meaning of new items, predict outcomes, or filling missing information.

Note-taking
Writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic, or numerical form while listening or reading.

Summarizing
Making a mental, oral, or written summary of new information gained through listening or reading.

Recombination
Constructing a meaningful sentence or larger language sequence by combining known elements in a new way.

Translation
Using the first language as a base for understanding and/or producing second language (p.138).

Finally social/affective strategies are referred to as “a broad grouping that involves either interaction with another person or ideational control over affec. The social/affective strategies identified by O’Malley and Chamot and their definitions are as follows:

Questioning for clarification: eliciting from a teacher or peer more additional explanations, rephrasing, examples, or verification.

Cooperation: working together or with one or more peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral or written performance.

Self-talk: using mental control to assure oneself that a learning activity will be successful or to reduce anxiety about a task (p.120). Oxford (1990) attempted to reduce the perceived problem that many strategy inventories appeared to emphasize cognitive and metacognitive strategies and to ascribe much less importance to affective and social strategies, she classified learning strategies into six groups: memory strategies (which relates to how students remember language), cognitive strategies (which relates to how students think about their own learning), compensation strategies (which enables students to make up for limited knowledge), metacognitive strategies (relating to how students manage their own learning), affective strategies (relating to students’ feelings) and social strategies (which involve learning by interaction with others).

These six categories, which underlie the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) used by Oxford and others for a great deal of the research in the learning strategy field, were further divided into direct strategies (those which directly involve the target language such as reviewing and practicing) and indirect strategies (those which provide in direct support for language-learning such as planning, co-operating, and seeking opportunities).

Oxford’s taxonomy is perhaps the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies to date (Ellis, 1994, p. 539).

METHOD

Participants
Fifty juniors, 35 females and 15 males, majoring in English Translation of Shiraz Azad University participated in this study.

Instruments
The instrument used in this study was a Persian translation of an English Standard Strategy Inventory for Language Learning called (SILL), version 7.0, (Oxford, 1989). The SILL, a self-reporting questionnaire is for students of English as a second or foreign language by requiring students to answer 50-item questions on their language-strategy use on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from “never or almost never true” to “always or almost always true.” Oxford (1990) developed this Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, ESL/EFL Student Version), which consists six...
categories;
1) Memory strategies for storing and retrieving new information (Remembering more effectively)
2) Cognitive strategies for manipulating and transforming learning materials (Using all your mental processes)
3) Compensation strategies for overcoming deficiencies of knowledge in language (Compensating for missing knowledge)
4) Metacognitive strategies for directing the learning process (Organizing and evaluating your learning)
5) Affective strategies for regulating emotions (Managing your emotions)
6) Social strategies for increasing learning experience with other people. (Learning with others)

Data analysis
After completing the questionnaires by the students they were collected and checked for completeness. Out of 55, 50 of them which were completely filled were chosen and after scoring the questionnaire, items were codified and were subjected to statistical procedures such as follows: descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations and correlations as well as ANOVA that were obtained through the SPSS statistical package.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Overall strategy use
The mean scores and standard deviations of all the six categories of learning strategies used by students are reported in table 1. As it is shown in the table all the means and standard deviations are between 2.80 to 3.40 on a scale of 5 out of a possible 5. This range i.e. (2.5 to 3.5) is almost can be considered as a medium range according to oxford 1990. thus what is apparent from this table is that students used learning strategies at a medium level.

Table 1. Mean scores and standard deviations of the SILL categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory Strategies</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Strategies</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is shown in table 1 metacognitive strategies which include planning, arranging and evaluating learning process were used with the most frequency (M=3.3), followed by affective strategies (3.19), memory(3.06), compensation (M=2.9), cognitive (2.89) and social strategies(M=2.88). In other words in this table, metacognitive strategies were the most frequently used, and social strategies the least frequently used of all six categories. May be this finding is due to the fact that Iranian English university students feel some sense of responsibility and independence (they plan their own learning) in the process of language learning.

Table 2. Correlation analysis among the SILL categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Memory</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Compensation</th>
<th>Metacognitive</th>
<th>Affective</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relationship between how the six categories of language learning strategies are related to each other shown in table 2. the six categories were related to each other in a rather week to moderate fashion. Table 3 shows that the strongest relationship was between compensation and cognitive, metacognitive strategies (R=.49).next memory strategies were more related to social (r=-.42) than to affective (.35) and metacognitive(.28) and cognitive (.26) and compensation strategies(.04). This shows that the more memory strategies students used the more social and affective strategies they used, and the less metacognitive and cognitive and compensation strategies. Table 3 also shows that cognitive strategies have the strongest relationship with metacognitive (.49) and compensation strategies (.49) and then with affective (.28), and social (.17) strategies. Relating to compensation strategies the table shows that they are more related to social (.27) than affective (.26) and metacognitive (.01) strategies. Then the table shows the relationship between metacognitive and affective (.39) and after that metaconitve and social (.37) strategies. Finally the table reports the relationship between affective and social strategies (.36). Generally the table indicates that those who use cognitive strategies are often inclined to use other kinds of strategies, too.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION
Table 1 revealed that the subjects of this study reportedly used all strategy categories. In this study, students reported using metacognitive strategies with the highest frequency (M=3.33 on the 1-5 scale), followed by affective strategies (M=3.19), memory (M=3.06), compensation (M=2.9), cognitive (M=2.89), and the least frequently used strategies, i.e., the social strategies (M=2.88). This finding is somehow matched to the results of the study by Abu Shmais (2003) in which English major university students employed metacognitive strategies more frequently than the other types of learning strategies.

**Relationship of strategy use to sex**

As shown in Table 3, males showed higher levels of strategy use in all the six categories except social strategies in which both males and females had equal frequencies (M=2.85). Table 3 shows that males use memory (M=3.23), metacognitive (M=3.21), and compensation strategies (M=3.15), and females use social (M=2.85), affective (M=2.85), and memory strategies (M=2.88) more frequently than the other categories of learning strategy. Results of ANOVA indicated that the gender-related difference is significant on two scales: 'cognitive' and metacognitive. See Table 4.

**Strategy use by Gender**

In this study, males scored significantly higher than females in terms of frequency of strategy use in all the six categories, except social categories that both males and females had equal frequencies. This result is in contrast to the findings of the study by Lee (2003). In his study of the Korean secondary school students, Lee found that females showed significantly higher levels of strategy use than males. Table 3 showed that males used memory, metacognitive and compensation strategies more frequently, while females used memory, metacognitive, affective and social strategies (M=.85) with higher frequencies. The results also show that in two scales of the inventory, namely: student’s perceived use of all their mental process (cognitive), and their satisfaction in their organizing and evaluating their learning of FL. A significant difference between males and females exists. Therefore, the results of the present study are not consistent with several other studies that have reported that female learners use strategies with greater frequency than male learners (e.g., Oxford and Nyikos, 1989; Green and Oxford, 1995). This study confirms the findings of the original study by Leyla Tercanlioglu (2004) after which this one has been replicated.
CONCLUSION

This study explored the possible effects of gender on the use of language learning strategies and following conclusions were drawn:

The students consciously employed a variety of learning strategies with rather week to a moderate frequency. Results showed that the most frequently used strategies by all the students in this study were metacognitive, affective and memory strategies.

Findings of this study indicate that there is a relationship between sex differences and the choice of strategies. A significant difference was found between males and females in the use of strategies in this study. In overall strategy use, males showed greater use of all six categories except social strategies that the frequency of both males and females were the same.

The reported use of metacognitive strategies (the most frequently used strategy by all students) had the strongest relationship with cognitive strategies.

Implications for further research

A lot of studies have been carried out on the field of language learning strategies, but still there are a lot more to do. The main reason is the important contribution these strategies have on learners’ proficiency in the language which is to be learnt.

As is suggested by Cohen (1995), there are five issues which deserve more reflection:

1) The distinction between the term “strategy” and other terminology (sub strategies, tactics and techniques)
2) Whether learning strategies must be conscious in order to be referred to as strategies or not
3) Devising some criteria for classifying language learning and language use strategies
4) Broading the concept of communicative competence
5) Linking learning strategies to learning styles and other personality factors.

Metacognitive program is needed to be worked on more. Other related issues to the concept of language learning strategies are: critical thinking, faculty perceptions, educational technology, interdisciplinary courses, cooperative learning strategies, the college culture, faculty and administration relations and team teaching which researchers should focus on them more.

CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) is a new strategy which needs more study. An interesting study can be on the effect of self-regulated learning strategies on performance in learner-controlled and program-controlled computer-based instruction. Other strategies such as self-monitoring and instructor-monitoring have been in the minority in different surveys.

Studies on ethnic minority students’ reported LS and gender are also important in researches on LLS. There should be some examinations on the relationship between students’ awareness and their application of learning strategies. The relationship between learning strategies use and prior knowledge, interests, learning goals and conceptual understanding can make good subjects for further research. The use of strategies in improving proficiency in different skills is also important; for instance the use of RA (Reading Aloud) strategies in planning, describing goals, text types, general guidelines, prerequisites, phonological features is of importance in facilitating spoken production and communication; it is also necessary to work on the effectiveness of peer-assisted learning strategies for reading proficiency.

A comparison between students’ use of technology for learning relative to more traditional learning methods is also a new and interesting issue in strategy research.

There is also a need for research and practice focused on the language learning strategies of speakers of other languages other than English.

Researchers must reconceptualize L2 learning strategies to include the social and affective sides of learning along with the more intellectual sides. The learner is not just a cognitive and metacognitive machine but, rather, a whole person.

Research should be replicated so more consistent information becomes available on how students from different cultural backgrounds use language learning strategies. It is also essential to do more research on factors affecting strategy choice, such as motivation, gender, etc. More study is recommended in three areas: how to identify students’ current learning strategies, how to help individual students discern which strategies are most relevant to their learning styles, tasks, and goals; and aiding students in developing orchestrated strategy use rather than a scattered approach.

There is a need to provide students with further opportunities to use LLSs more frequently, since the less frequent strategies (cognitive and compensation) can form the core of a program of classroom strategy instruction. Research on the frequency of use of the social and affective strategies and choice of given strategies is recommended since it is helpful for both teachers and learners. There is a need for conducting research that will pave the way for
building the theory that seems necessary for more language learning strategies work to be relevant to current foreign language teaching practice. Some more suggestions for further research are as follows:

Discovering different types of instruction in learning strategies is very beneficial to students. (Chamot and Kupper, 1989)

Demonstrating that L2 learners can be taught to use tactics in methodical ways. (Bialystok, 1981)

Thoughtfully evaluating what learners notice and what they think as they learn another language. (Schmit, 1990)

Investigating the "transferability" of learning strategies between the classroom setting and outside the classroom. (O'Malley, et al., 1985a)

Validating successful learning strategies which do not necessarily come only from "good learners". (Han, 2001, p. 273)

**Pedagogical implications**

The findings of this study have pedagogical implications for instruction and curriculum development. First, learners of English as a foreign language should learn to recognize the strategies they are using and be advised to select most appropriate techniques for the instructional environment.

Second: teachers should become more aware of the factors affecting the use of language learning strategies and try to take into consideration these factors while designing the syllabus and evaluating the students.

**Appendix A**

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version for spoken of other languages learning English

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

**Directions**

This form of STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL) is for students of English as a foreign language. You will find statements about learning English. Please read statement. On the separate worksheet, write the response (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) that tells HOW TRUE OF YOU THE STATEMENT IS.

1. Never or almost never true of me.
2. Usually not true of me.
3. Somewhat true of me.
4. Usually true of me.
5. Always or almost always true of me.

NEVER OR ALMOST TRUE OF ME means that the statement is very rarely true of you. USUALLY NOT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true less than half the time. SOMETHAT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you about half the time. USUALLY TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true more than half the time. ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you almost always.

Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you should be. there are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Put your answers on the separate worksheet. Please make no marks on the items. Work as quickly as you can without being careless. This usually takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, let the teacher know immediately.

**Remember!**

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Sometimes true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

1. I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.
2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.
4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.
5. I use rhymes to remember new English words.
6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.
7. I physically act out new English words.
8. I review English lessons often.
9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.
10. I say or write new English words several times.
11. I try to talk like native English speakers.
12. I practice the sounds of English.
13. I use the English words I know in different ways.
15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.
16. I read for pleasure in English.
17. I write notes, messages, letters or reports in English.
18. I first skim an English passage (read the passage quickly) then go back and read quickly.
19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.
20. I try to find pattern in English.
21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.
22. I try not to translate word-for-word.
23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.
24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.
25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.
26. I make up new words if I don't know the right ones in English.
27. I read English without looking up every new word.
28. I try to guess what the other person will say in English.
29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.
30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.
31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.
32. I pay attention when someone speaking English.
33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.
34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.
35. I look for people I can talk to in English.
36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.
37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills.
38. I think about my progress in learning English.
39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.
40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.
42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.
43. I write down my feeling in a language learning diary.
44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.
45. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.
46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.
47. I practice English with other students.
48. I ask for help from English speakers.
49. I ask questions in English.
50. I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.

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