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The Language Learning Strategies used by High School Students: It's Relationship to their English Performance

Sittie Ainah A. Diamla, Norhanifah O. Mangotara
Co-authors: Prof. Teodoro M. Drilon, Wardah D. Guimba, Ph.D., Rohanie M. Sultan, Ph.D. and Prof. Sittie Khaironisa S. Marohombsar
College of Education, Mindanao State University
Marawi City, Philippines

Abstract. Studies about the individual learner's learning behavior towards learning the second language using Language Learning Strategies (LLS) has been a concern since 1970's (Song, 2005). In line with this, the current research sought to find out what are the (LLS) of the four sections of 4th year students of ICNHS in learning English by utilizing the descriptive-correlation design in a survey form. It was found out that most of the respondents use "practicing and monitoring" as their strategy in learning English in the cognitive and metacognitive aspects, meaning the respondents look for opportunities to speak the language and improve it, and they improve one's speech when they mispronounced English words and mistakenly used the rules of grammar. It was also found out that only "repeating and monitoring" have significant relationship to the respondents' grade in terms of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which means that in order for them to learn the English language they usually recur the language by over drilling and silently run-through and they improve their speech when they misused the rules of grammar and mispronounce words. Thus, language learners must be willingly addressed to themselves the importance and the role of the (LLS) in their language learning since they are a great help to learn the English language.

Keywords: Language Learning Strategies (LLS); English Performance.

Introduction

Second language acquisition (SLA) has been the main concern of several researchers. They sought to identify strategies used by successful learners with the idea that these strategies might be transferred to less successful learners. Rigney (1978) stated that learning strategies are broadly defined as maneuvers

and processes used by learners to facilitate their acquisition, storing, retrieving, and using of information in learning. While, Oxford (1990) extended the meaning by stating that language strategies as specific actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations with the goal of orienting and developing the learners' communicative competence. Indeed, learning and language strategies play vital roles in both first and second language learning (as cited by Song 2005).

Oxford (1990) classified language learning strategies into direct strategies and indirect strategies. According to (Chamot & Kupper, 1989 as cited by Khan, 2012) there are various types of language learning strategies designed by Oxford (1990) herself such as the cognitive strategies which is a direct strategy and, metacognitive strategies which is an indirect strategy. However, on the information processing theories using a series of statistical methods, Purpura (1999) just focused on the two strategies which are the cognitive and the metacognitive strategies. He categorized three processing variables of cognitive strategies namely (a) the comprehending, (b) the storing or memory and (c) the using or retrieval process, while the metacognitive strategy has a one-factor model from which assessment was eventually defined.

Furthermore, Hunt's (1982) and Gagne, Yekovich and Yekovich's (1993) also classified what Purpura (1999) did in cognitive and metacognitive strategy. He mentioned that in the comprehending model, the strategy type variables stand for analyzing and clarifying/verifying. On the other hand, the storing or memory model represents associating, transferring, repeating, summarizing and applying rules. Still, the other one is using or retrieval model which corresponds to analyzing, inferencing, applying rules, linking with prior knowledge, and practicing naturalistically. On the other hand, metacognitive strategy use has a four strategy type variables which are assessing the situation, monitoring, self-evaluation, and testing (Hunt's, 1982 and Gagne, Yekovich and Yekovich's, 1993 as cited by Song 2005).

This study wants to find out if there is a relationship between the profile of the respondents and their language learning strategies specifically on their cognitive strategies (linking with prior knowledge, repeating, summarizing, applying rules, associating, transferring, clarifying, practicing, inferencing, and analyzing) and on their metacognitive strategies (assessing the situation, monitoring, self-evaluating, and self-testing).

Theoretical Framework and Related Studies

There are two significant aspects for teaching and gaining knowledge in learning second language. First, the second language learners should analyze the strategies they used during the process of language learning, the educators can procure knowledge into the metacognitive, cognitive, social and affective processes which involved in language learning. Second, is by upholding the idea that those learners who are less successful in learning a language can be taught new strategies, thereby helping them to become better language learners

(Grenfell & Harris, 1999 as cited by Allison, 2010). In this connection, there are two focal theoretical assumptions which lie beneath contemporary concepts on language learning strategies (LLS) such as McLaughin's (1978) Cognitive Process Theory and Krashen's (1976; 1977) Monitor and Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis. In relation to this study, the researchers use the Krashen's Monitor and Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis which makes up the theoretical framework of this study.

According to Krashen (1987, pp.283), the most fundamental hypothesis used for ELL students is the acquisition-learning distinction. There are two independent systems of second language performance (1) the acquired system and (2) the learned system. The acquired system or acquisition is the product of a subconscious process very alike to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. "It requires meaningful interaction in the target language-natural communication in which speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in their communicative act" (Krashen, 1987, p. 283). While the learned system or learning itself is the product of formal teaching which encompasses a conscious process causing in conscious knowledge about the language, for example, knowledge of grammar rules and it is believed that "'learning' is less important than 'acquisition.'" (p. 284).

Krashen (1987) claimed that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, good self-image, and has low level of anxiety are well prepared for success in second language acquisition. Nevertheless, low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to raise the affective filter and form a mental block that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. Krashen also believed that positive affect is needed, but not sufficient on its own, for acquisition to take place (as cited by Allison, 2010). Another theory of Krashen is the Monitor Hypothesis in which the relationship between the acquisition and the learning were explained. According to Krashen the utterance initiator is the acquisition system, while the one who performs the role of the monitor or the editor is the learning system which also forwards the idea that monitor acts in planning, editing and correcting function when three circumstances are met: which are second language learner (1) has adequate time at his or her disposal; (2) focuses on form or thinks about correctness; and (3) knows the rule. In addition, Krashen said that, the monitor has a minor role and that is to correct deviations from 'normal' speech and to give speech a more honed appearance (Krashen, 1988 as cited by Schötz, 2007).

A study conducted by Yusoph (2012) on the factors affecting English Language Learning among Technology students of MSU, Marawi City. The factors considered in her study were the affective, cognitive, and social. Findings of her study revealed that the factors did not significantly affect the language learning of the respondents because there could be some other factors that greatly influence their learning. In addition, this study shows different ranking from different colleges in terms of cognitive strategies. In the College of Forestry the cognitive strategy inferencing ranks first, College of Agriculture shows that transferring and analyzing rank first. On the other hand the respondents from

College of Fisheries show that practicing ranks first. Whereas, in the College of Forestry, ranking in metacognitive strategies the assessing the situation and monitoring rank first, while in the College of Agriculture it was self- evaluating that ranks first, and in the College of Fisheries it was self-testing that ranks first.

Research Methodology

This study employed the descriptive-correlation design. The correlation research design was employed to determine the relationships between the variables investigated in this study. The respondent's first periodical grade was correlated to their strategies use in learning English namely the cognitive strategies, and metacognitive strategies.
The study was conducted at Iligan City National High School which is located at General Wood Street, Iligan City, Lanao del Norte, Philippines. The said school was established on July 1, 1963 by the honorable City Mayor Camilo P. Cabili. The school pursues the educational goals and objectives mandated by Department of Education and direct all its efforts to contribute towards the attainment of national development. The respondents were the 158 fourth year high school students of Iligan City National High School.

The researchers adapted the revised version of Strategy Used Questionnaire (SUQ), and the Cognitve and Metacognitive Strategy Use (CMSU), Song (2005) on Purpura's (1999)). The CMSU has 27 items of cognitive strategy and 16 items of metacognitive strategy with a 6-point Likert scale of 0 (never), 1 (rarely), 2 (sometimes), 3 (often), 4 (usually), 5 (always). A pilot survey for validation and reliability test of the instruments was conducted to all the fourth year students of AL-Khwarizmi International College (AKIC), Marawi City, Philippines. The overall reliability coefficient of the 43 item SUQ was $\alpha = 0.917$, while $\alpha = 0.863$ for the 27 cognitive strategy use items and $\alpha = 0.861$ for the 16 metacognitive strategy use items.

Findings and Discussions

Based on the gathered data, the following findings were statistically analyzed & interpreted.

Table 1
First Periodical Grade in English of the Respondents

Grade	Frequency	Percent
Passing (80)	1	.6
Fair/Satisfactory (82-86)	9	5.7
Good (87-92)	126	79.7
Very Good (93-96)	22	13.9
Total	158	100.0

Using the scale from 98 and above as excellent and 74 and below as failed, the first periodical grade in English of the respondents illustrates that many (79.7%) of them were good in English. This may be attributed to the gender composition of the respondents in which majority (110 females; 48 males) are females, and accordingly females are better at second language learning and that they are frequent users of language learning strategies (Ellis, 1994; Aslan, 2009; Ehrman and Oxford, 1989; Green and Oxford, 1995; Oxford 1993).

Table 2
Respondents' Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive Strategies	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
Practicing	3.8925	.72567	Usually Used	1
Linking w/ Prior Knowledge	3.8710	.71813	Usually Used	2
Repeating	3.8526	.82544	Usually Used	3
Applying Rules	3.7588	.78825	Usually Used	4
Associating	3.6970	.81326	Usually Used	5
Inferencing	3.5948	.92969	Usually Used	6
Clarifying	3.5506	.98749	Usually Used	7
Analyzing	3.4936	.97970	Usually Used	8
Transferring	3.4480	.90007	Usually Used	9
Summarizing	3.3449	.97239	Often Used	10
Overall	3.65038	0.864009	Usually Used	

Scale:
0.00 – 0.83 = Never Used
0.84 – 1.67 = Rarely Used
1.68 – 2.51 = Sometimes Used
2.52 – 3.35 = Often Used
3.36 – 4.19 = Usually Used
4.20 – 5.00 = Always Used

As shown in Table 2 the respondents show more preference in using the cognitive strategy ***Practicing***. This means that in learning English they always practice speaking the language in order for them to hone and to polish the skill. The respondents' look for opportunities to speak the language as much as possible, and they improve it. It is easy for them to learn English language when they keep on over drilling. This affirms the result of the study of Yusoph (2012) which shows that the respondents from College of Fisheries are also inclined in using "Practicing" as their cognitive strategy in learning English.

Table 3
Respondents' Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive Strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Qualitative Description	Rank
Monitoring	4.2357	1.52625	Always	1
Self-Evaluating	3.9916	.62976	Usually Used	2
Assessing the Situation	3.9199	.81743	Usually Used	3
Self-Testing	3.8513	.81538	Usually Used	4
Overall	3.999625	0.947205	Usually Used	

The respondents are more inclined in using the metacognitive strategy ***Monitoring*** as their metacognitive strategy as revealed in the data presented in Table 3. This means that the respondents are monitoring their speech for accuracy, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, and they correct themselves whenever they mispronounce words or when they commit errors in structure. They are also conscious in committing errors in the rules of grammar and structure of English language by always checking whether they are correct or not. In simpler terms the respondents achieve perfection. This affirms the findings of the study of Yusoph (2012) in which the respondents from the College of Forestry show more preference in using "Monitoring" and "Self-testing" as their metacognitive strategy.

Table 4
Respondents' Grade and Cognitive Strategies Used

Cognitive Strategies	Cramer's V	Significance Value	Interpretation
Linking with Prior Knowledge	.146	.628	Not Significant
Repeating	.245	.011	Significant
Summarizing	.167	.586	Not Significant
Applying Rules	.105	.835	Not Significant
Associating	.169	.359	Not Significant
Transferring	.152	.538	Not Significant
Clarifying	.178	.453	Not Significant
Practicing	.069	.988	Not Significant
Inferencing	.176	.505	Not Significant
Analyzing	.173	.524	Not Significant

**Tested at 0.05 level of significance*

Table 4 shows the correlation between the respondents' first periodical grade and the Cognitive strategies they use in learning the English language. The table

indicates that, among the cognitive strategies, it is only "repeating" which appears to have a significant relationship to the respondents' grade which has a Cramer's V coefficient of 0.245 and significant value of 0.011. It reveals that there is a strategy that prominently influences the grade of the respondents' in learning the English language. This means that, in order for them to learn English language they usually repeat utterances, by over drilling and silently running through. Hence, the table provided an adequate proof of the significant relationship between the respondents' grade and one cognitive strategy which is "repeating". The calculated Cramer's V coefficient of 0.245 generated a significant value of 0.011 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance set to test the null hypothesis. Therefore, the null hypothesis on this aspect is rejected.

Table 5
Respondents' Grade and Metacognitive Strategies Used

Metacognitive Strategies	Cramer's V	Significance Value	Interpretation
Assessing the Situation	.126	.834	Not Significant
Monitoring	*.293*	*.000*	*Significant*
Self-Evaluating	.139	.418	Not Significant
Self-Testing	.179	.437	Not Significant

Tested at 0.05 level of significance

Table 5 reveals the product of the correlation between the respondents' 1st periodical grade and the metacognitive strategies they used in learning the English language. The table specified that among the metacognitive strategies, it was only "monitoring" which has a significant relationship to the respondents' grade which had a Cramer's V coefficient value of 0.293 and has a significant value of 0.000. It promotes the idea that there is a strategy that highly influenced the grade of the respondents' in learning English language. Meaning, in learning English language the respondents' try to improve one's speech every time they misuse the grammar rules and mispronounce words. At this point they think what is the right rule and word to use in a particular situation.

Additionally, the other metacognitive strategies used when correlated to the respondents' grades, came out insignificant, since, "assessing the situation" had a Cramer's V coefficient of 0.126 and significant value of 0.834; "self-evaluating" had a Cramer's V coefficient of 0.139 and significant value of 0.418; "self-testing" had a Cramer's V coefficient of 0.179 and significant value of 0.437 because their significant values exceed 0.05.

Moreover, the table presented a valid proof showing that there is a significant relationship that exists between the respondents' grade and the "monitoring" as a metacognitive strategy. The totaled Cramer's V coefficient of 0.293 produced a significant value of 0.000 which is less than the 0.05 level of significant set to test the null hypothesis. Thus, the null hypothesis on this aspect is rejected.

Conclusion

The typical fourth year high school students from the selected respondents of Iligan City National High School (ICNHS) were at the age of fifteen (15), mostly females and earn "good" grade. It was found out that among the cognitive strategies they used; it was only "repeating" which has a significant relationship with respondents' grade. It implies that the respondents imitate a language model by doing over practice and silent rehearsal in order for them to acquire their second language. While among the metacognitive strategies they employed, it was only the "monitoring" strategies that was found out to have a significant relationship with respondents' grades. This means that the respondents have this tendency to correct one's speech for accuracy, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, or for appropriateness related to the setting or the people who are present. Thus, this study is evidence that there are strategies that affect the English language learning or English performance.

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