

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY TAXONOMY USED BY THE TEACHER IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Trisna Dinillah Harya

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri (STAIN) Jurai Siwo Metro

Email: trisnaharya@yahoo.com

Abstract: Language Learning Strategies is simply refers to an individual's approach to complete a task. This is an individual way of organizing and using a particular set of skills in order to learn content or accomplish other tasks more effectively and efficiently in school as well as in nonacademic settings. Some previously conducted research found that good language learners actively involve themselves in the language learning process by identifying and seeking preferred learning environments and exploring them. The newly adapted curriculum in Indonesia emphasizes on the discovery learning. This study is aimed to find facts dealing with learning strategies used by high achievers and underachievers, whether there are any differences between the two groups. After research was conducted, the data shows that there are some differences in the learning strategies used by the two groups. The high-achievers uses more varied strategies.

Keywords: Learning strategies, high-achiever, low-achiever

INTRODUCTION

Research into Language Learning Strategies (LLS) began in the 1960's, when the development in cognitive psychology gave influence to the studies of LLS. The primary concern in most research was on "identifying what language learners report they do to learn second/ foreign language, or in some cases , are observed doing while learning a second/foreign language." (Rubin and Wenden 1987: 19).

The first study on LLS was by Aaron Carton and it was published in 1966 with the tittle The method of Inference in Foreign Language Study, followed by Rubin in (1971) which focus on strategies of successful learners. In (1975), he classified strategies in terms of processes contributing directly or indirectly to language learning. This was followed by Wong-Fillmore

(1976), tarone (1977), Naiman (1978), Bialystok (1979), Cohen and Apek (1981), Wenden (1982), Politzer and McGroarty (1985), Conti and Kolsody (1997) who studied strategies used by language learner during the process of foreign language learning. These investigation have shown the importance of LLS in making language learning more efficient and effective (Endang Fauziati 2010: 149) .

In the midst of 2013, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture introduced a new curriculum which is called Curriculum 2013. In this curriculum, the process of teaching learning is emphasized in how students learn not how teachers teach. The Decree of Ministry of Education and Culture No 65, 2013 (Permendikbud No 65 Tahun 2013:

1-3) stated that the principles of the teaching-learning process among them are :

1. changing the state of students of being taught into discovery learning
2. the teacher is not the only resource but variety of resources must be used
3. changing from textual approach to scientific approach.

To reinforce scientific approach, discovery /inquiry learning and project based learning must be adopted in the learning process.

The shift from the old to the new curriculum often causes gap the theory and the practice. Teachers are trying to adapt to the new curriculum and trying to find best ways to facilitate students to have appropriate and meaningful learning experience. Learning strategies used by the students is an interesting part to observe because it is a part of learning experiences.

Why language learning strategies are important ? Some previously conducted research found that good language learners :

- a. Actively involve themselves in the language learning process by identifying and seeking preferred learning environments and exploring them,
- b. Develop an awareness of language as a system,
- c. Develop an awareness of language as a means of communication and interaction,
- d. Accept and cope with the affective demands of the new language being learnt,
- e. Extend and revise L2 system by inferencing and monitoring.

Overview of language Learning Strategies (LLS)

LLS is simply refers to an individual 's approach to complete a task. This is an individual way of organizing and using a particular set of skills in order to learn content or accomplish other tasks more effectively and efficiently in school as well as in nonacademic settings (Schumaker & Deshler, 1992:56. Oxford (2002: 362) put it as “ specific behaviours as thought processes that students use to enhance their own L2 learning”. Strategic learners have metacognitive knowledge about their own thinking and learning approaches. They have a good understanding of what a task entails and the ability to organize the strategies which best meet both the task demands and their own learning strengths. (Chamot, 2008: 14). Consequently, LLS enable learner “to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learners” (Allwright in Oxford, 2002: 362).

A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is neutral. A strategy is useful

for learner if it suits well with the learner's task, fits with the learner's learning style , and links it with another relevant strategy. Under these conditions, the strategies will “make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations”. (Oxford, 2002: 362). Therefore, skilled teacher can teach learners how to learn, making them aware of LLS and able to use them to enhance their own learning. Fedderholtd (1997:1) states that learner who are capable of using variou LLS can improve his language skills in better way. Oxford (1990: 1) states that “... are especially important for language

learning because they are tools for active, self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence.

The teachers can learn the LLS already used by the students by observing their behavior in class, they can also use questionnaires to fill out at the beginning of the course to describe themselves and their language learning to identify the students goals, motivations, LLS and their understanding of the course to be taught. Each learner may have different learning style and varied awareness of the use of strategies. Thus, it can be stated that the most important role of the teacher is to provide a range of tasks to match varied learning styles. (Hall 1997: 4).

Importance of Language Learning Strategies in Language Learning and Teaching

Since the amount of information to be processed by language learners is high in language classroom, learners use different language learning strategies in performing the tasks and processing the new input they face. Language learning strategies are good indicators of how learners approach tasks or problems encountered during the process of language learning. In other words, language learning strategies, while nonobservable or unconsciously used in some cases, give language teachers valuable clues about how their students assess the situation, plan, select appropriate skills so as to understand, learn, or remember new input presented in the language classroom.

According to Fedderholdt (1997:1), the language learner capable of using a wide variety of language learning strategies appropriately can improve

his language skills in a better way. Metacognitive strategies improve organization of learning time, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Cognitive strategies include using previous knowledge to help solve new problems. Socioaffective strategies include asking native speakers to correct their pronunciation, or asking a classmate to work together on a particular language problem. Developing skills in three areas, such as metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective can help the language learner build up learner independence and autonomy whereby he can take control of his own learning.

Lessard-Clouston (1997:3) states that language learning strategies contribute to the development of the communicative competence of the students. Being a broad concept, language learning strategies are used to refer to all strategies foreign language learners use in learning the target language and communication strategies are one type of language learning strategies. It follows from this that language teachers aiming at developing the communicative competence of the students and language learning should be familiar with language learning strategies. As Oxford (1990: 1) states, language learning strategies "... are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence." Besides developing the communicative competence of the students, teachers who train students to use language learning strategies can help them become better language learners. Helping students

understand good language learning strategies and training them to develop and use such good language learning strategies can be considered to be the appreciated characteristics of a good language teacher (Lessard-Clouston 1997:3).

Research into the good language learning strategies revealed a number of positive strategies so that such strategies could also be used by bad language learners trying to become more successful in language learning. However, there is always the possibility that bad language learners can also use the same good language learning strategies while becoming unsuccessful owing to some other reasons. At this point, it should be strongly stressed that using the same good language learning strategies does not guarantee that bad learners will also become successful in language learning since other factors may also play role in success.

The Teacher's Role in Strategy Training

The language teacher aiming at training his students in using language learning strategies should learn about the students, their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn what language learning strategies students already appear to be using, observing their behavior in class. Do they ask for clarification, verification or correction? Do they cooperate with their peers or seem to have much contact outside of class with proficient foreign language users? Besides observing their behavior in class, the teacher can prepare a short questionnaire so that students can fill in at the beginning of a course to describe themselves and their language learning.

Thus, the teacher can learn the purpose of their learning a language, their favorite/least favorite kinds of class activities, and the reason why they learn a language. The teacher can have adequate knowledge about the students, their goals, motivations, language learning strategies, and their understanding of the course to be taught (Lessard-Clouston 1997: 5). It is a fact that each learner within the same classroom may have different learning styles and varied awareness of the use of strategies. The teacher cannot attribute importance to only one group and support the analytical approach or only give input by using the auditory mode. The language teacher should, therefore, provide a wide range of learning strategies in order to meet the needs and expectations of his students possessing different learning styles, motivations, strategy preferences, etc. Therefore, it can be stated that the most important teacher role in foreign language teaching is the provision of a range of tasks to match varied learning styles (Hall 1997: 4).

In addition to the students, the language teacher should also analyze his textbook to see whether the textbook already includes language learning strategies or language learning strategies training. The language teacher should look for new texts or other teaching materials if language learning strategies are not already included within his materials. The language teacher should also study his own teaching method and overall classroom style. Analyzing his lesson plans, the language teacher can determine whether his lesson plans give learners chance to use a variety of learning styles and strategies or not. The teacher can see

whether his teaching allows learners to approach the task at hand in different ways or not. The language teacher can also be aware of whether his strategy training is implicit, explicit, or both. It should be emphasized that questioning himself about what he plans to do before each lesson and evaluating his lesson plan after the lesson in terms of strategy training, the teacher can become better prepared to focus on language learning strategies and strategy training during the process of his teaching (Lessard-Clouston 1997:5).

LLS Taxonomy / Classification

There are different ways of classifying LLS, however most of them reflect more or less the same.

Rubin's Taxonomy

According to Rubins,, there are three types of LLS used by learners that contribute directly or indirectly to language learning, namely language strategies, communication strategies, and social strategies.

Firstly, Language strategies, are those which have direct contribution to the development of the language system constructed by the learner. They consist of two types: cognitive strategies and meta-cognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. Rubin identify six main cognitive strategies, namely: strategies, cognitive strategies and socio-affective strategies.

clarification/ verification, guessing/ inductive inference, deductive reasoning, practice memorization and monitoring. Meta-cognitive strategies are those used to

manage, regulate, or self-directed language-learning. They involve various process such as planning, prioritizing, setting goals, and self-management.

Secondly, Communicative strategies are less directly related to language learning since their focus is on the process of participating in a conversation and getting meaning across or clarifying the speaker's message.

Thirdly, Social strategies refer to the activities learner engage in which afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge.

O 'Malley's Taxonomy

O'Malley's Taxonomy et al (1985: 582) divide LLS into three main subcategories, namely: meta-cognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and socio-affective strategies.

Firstly, meta-cognitive strategies refer to a term used in information- processing theory to indicate an "executive" function, that is, strategies which involve planning for learning, thinking about learning process as it is taking place, for learning, thinking about learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Among the main meta-cognitive strategies, it is possible to include advance organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self management, functional planning, self monitoring, delayed production, self evaluation (O 'Malley's Taxonomyat et al., 1985: 584).

LEARNING STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION
META-COGNITIVE STRATEGIES	
advance organizers	Making general but comprehensive preview of the organizing concept or principle in an anticipated learning activity
directed attention	Deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and ignore irrelevant distracters
selective attention	Deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of language input
self-management	Understanding the condition that help one learn and arranging for the presence of those conditions
functional planning	Planning for and rehearsing linguistic components necessary to carry out an upcoming language task
Self-monitoring	Correcting one speech for accuracy in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, or for appropriateness related to the setting or to the people who are present
delayed production	Consciously deciding to postpone speaking in order to learn initially through listening comprehension
self-evaluation	Checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against an internal measure of completeness and accuracy

Secondly, cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks and they involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. Among the most important cognitive strategies are repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, inference.

LEARNING STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION
COGNITIVE STRATEGIES	
Repetition	Imitating a language model, include overt practice and silent rehearsal
Resourcing	Using target language reference materials
Translation	Using L1 as a base for understanding and/or producing L2
Grouping	Reordering or reclassifying, and perhaps labeling, the material to be learned based on common attributes
note taking	Writing down the main idea, important points, outline, or summary of information presented orally or in writing
Deduction	Consciously applying rules to produce or understand the L2

Thirdly, socio-affective strategies have to do with social mediating activities and interacting with others. The main socio-affective strategies are cooperation and question for clarification.

LEARNING STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION
SOCIAL- AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES	
Cooperation	Working with one or more peers to obtain feedback, pool information, or model a language activity
question for clarification	Asking a teacher or other native speaker for repeatation , paraphrasing, explanation and/or examples

Stern's Taxonomy

According to Stern (1992: 262-266), there are five main LLS, namely: management and planning strategies, cognitive strategies, communicative experiential strategies, interpersonal strategies and affective strategies.

Firstly, Management and planning strategies are related with the learner's intention to direct his own learning.

Secondly, cognitive strategies are steps or operations used in learning that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials.

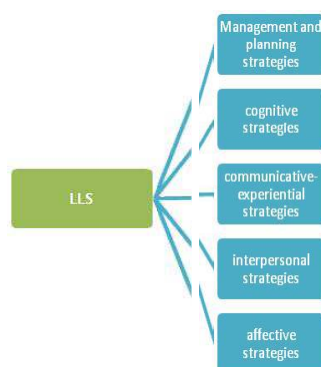
Thirdly, communicative experiential strategies may include circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase, or asking for repetition and explanation that are used by learner to keep a conversation going and to avoid interrupting the flow of communication.

Forth, Interpersonal strategies refer to strategies used by learners to

monitor their own development and evaluate their own performance.

Learners should contact with naïve speakers to become acquainted with the target language.

Fifth, Affective strategies refer to strategies used by learners to cater their own feeling when dealing with the complexity of language learning.



Oxford Taxonomy

The most comprehensive LLS classification is Strategy Inventory for Language Learning developed by Oxford. Her taxonomy is both comprehensive and practical. She classifies strategies into two strategy orientations, direct and indirect. **Direct LLS** involve the identification, retention, storage, or retrieval of words, phrases, and other elements of the target language. This is classified into memory, cognitive and linguistic deficiency compensation strategy. **Indirect LLS** concern the management of the learning which includes some activities such as needs assessment, activities planning and monitoring, and outcome evaluation. The indirect strategies is classified into meta-cognitive, affective and social strategy.

Memory strategies help learner link L2 items or concepts with one another. It is often used for

memorizing vocabulary or grammatical items.

Cognitive strategies enable learners to manipulate language material in direct ways (reasoning, analysis, note taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas.

Linguistic deficiency compensation strategies help learners make up for the lack of knowledge. These include guessing meaning from context, using synonyms, using paraphrase or using gestures.

Meta-cognitive strategies are used to manage the overall learning process including learner's learning style preferences and needs, planning for L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and schedule and evaluating the success LLS.

Affective strategies include identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance and using deep breathing or positive self-talk.

Social strategies help learners work with others and understand the target culture and the language. It includes asking question to get verification, asking for clarification, of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native speaker and exploring culture and social norms.

Among the four classifications, the one proposed by Oxford is the most comprehensive. However some experts have different views about learning strategies. "With some exceptions, strategies themselves are not inherently good or bad, but have the potential to be used effectively." (Cohen, 1998: 8)."

The total number or variety of strategies employed and the frequency with which any given strategy is used are not necessarily indicators of how successful they will be on a language task". (Cohen, 1998, pp.8-9).

The success or failure of a strategy hinges upon the **orchestration** of different components of the strategic behaviour. From selectively attending to a task, to the analysis of the task, to the choice of decisions, to strategy deployment and execution, to monitoring and modifying of the plan, and to the evaluation of strategy effectiveness, **flexibility** and **appropriateness** come in every step of the way (Gu, 2003). Strategies can be more or less personrelated, task-related, or learning context related. A strategy suitable for one particular person, task, or learning context may not be suitable for another (Gu, 2003).

Under-achiever Vs High-achiever

Underachievement is most commonly defined as a discrepancy between potential or performance (or achievement) (Reis & McCoach, 2000). Therefore, a student who appears capable of succeeding in school but is nonetheless struggling is referred to as an underachiever. Factors commonly associated with achievement include low academic self-concept (Schunk, 1998; Supplee, 1990; re, 1980), low self-efficacy (Schunk, 1998), low. Self-motivation (Weiner, low goal-valuation (McCall, Evahn & Kratzer, 1992), and negative attitude school and teachers (Colangelo, Kerr, Christensen & Maxey, 1993; Ford, 1996; 1995).

Most of the literature on underachievement suggests that underachievers were academic self-perceptions, lower self-motivation and self-regulation, and all directed behavior, and more negative attitudes toward school than high do (Reis & McCoach, 2000). However, the majority of research investigating common characteristics of underachieving students has employed qualitative, or single subject research methodology. Very few large-scale quantitative have examined the legitimacy of these hypotheses (Reis & McCoach, 2000).

High achievers are those who achieve a goal. In school, a high achiever would be a student who gets high marks, good grades. They do the work that is required and do it well. They tend to be well-organized, with good time management skills, which is why they turn in neat and tidy work on time. They also tend to be well-behaved, adjusting well to the classroom environment and participating enthusiastically in classroom discussions. (Carol Bainbridge, 2014: 1).

In this study under-achiever students refer to the students whose formative score is under minimum criteria or under passing grade, while high-achiever students refer to the students who has high rank for their formative scores.

Conclusion

Language learning strategies, being specific actions, behaviors, tactics, or techniques, facilitate the learning of the target language by the language learner. All language learners, needless to say, use language learning strategies in the learning process. Since the factors like age, gender, personality, motivation, self-

concept, life-experience, learning style, excitement, anxiety, etc. affect the way in which language learners learn the target language, it is not reasonable to support the idea that all language learners use the same good language learning strategies or should be trained in using and developing the same strategies to become successful learners.

Since LLS are proved to have significant correlation with language proficiency and good language learners commonly have various learning strategies, it is reasonable to support idea that all language learner should be trained in using and developing the LLS to become successful learners.

References

- Andrew, D. Cohen, *Strategies in learning and using a second language*. Harlow, Essex: Longman.1998
- Bainbridge Carol., 2014 "High Achiever: Gifted Children Categories" <http://giftedkids.about.com/od/glossary/g/High-Achiever.htm>
- Fauziati, Endang 2010. " *Teaching English as a Foreign Language* " Surakarta. Pustaka Utama
- Fedderholdt, Karen. 1997. "Using Diaries to Develop Language Learning Strategies" on Internet
- Hall, Stephen. 1997. "Language Learning Strategies: from the ideals to classroom tasks". Language and communication

Division, Temasek
Polytechnic on Internet.

Wellington peter.gu@vuw.ac.nz

Kementrian Pendidikan dan
Kebudayaan Indonesia 2013,
“*Salinan Lampiran peraturan
Menteri Pendidikan dan
Kebudayaan RI No. 65 Tahun
2013 tentang standar proses
pendidikan dasar dan
menengah*”. Jakarta

McCoach, D. Betsy 2001.
“*Comparison of high
achievers' and low achievers'
attitudes, perceptions, and
motivations*”. Del Siegle.
University of Connecticut.

O'malley, J. Michael, Chamot, Anna
U., Stewner-Manzanares,
Gloria, Russo, Rocco P., and
L. Kupper. 1985. "*Learning
Strategy Applications with
Students of English as a
Second Language*" in TESOL
Quarterly.

Oxford, Rebecca. 1990. *Language
Learning Strategies: What
Every Teacher Should Know*.
New York: Newbury House
Publishers.

Stern, H.H. 1992. *Issues and Options
in Language Teaching*.
Oxford: OUP.

Wenden, A. and Joan Rubin. 1987.
*Learner Strategies in
Language Learning*. New
Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Yongqi ,GU. 2014. "Language
Learner strategies:Definition,
classification, and current
understanding.New Zealand
Victoria University of