

INSTRUCTING LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE AUTONOMOUS LEARNING

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Abstract

The paper discusses the effects of language learning strategy instruction on the improvement of the four language skills at tertiary education level. The focus of the discussion reflects two main points. The first relates to the effect of instruction in the use of language learning strategies prior to undertaking autonomous language learning in a self-access center on the improvement of the four language skills, and the second relates to the language learning strategies used in the self-access center where autonomous language learning takes place. The paper argues that language learning strategies instruction promotes autonomous language learning mode and contributes to the improvement of both the productive and the receptive skills. It is also evident that there are some other language learning strategies used during the autonomous learning in the self-access center other than those identified and used in foreign language learning. Practical application of autonomous learning mode in the self-access center in relation to the teaching of English to non-language departments at tertiary education level is also suggested.

Keywords: language learning strategy instruction, autonomous language learning, self-access center

INTRODUCTION

My primary aim in this paper is to present an alternative on how self-access centers can make a better contribution to English as a second or foreign language learning in the tertiary education context. In order to achieve this aim, instruction in the use of language learning strategies prior to undertaking English language learning in self-access center and learning strategies used in a self-access center was investigated.

Language learning researchers (e.g., Nunan, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Prokop, 1989) have concluded that learning strategies can be taught in order to achieve better performance in language learning. The results of the

studies on the instruction of language learning strategies, in general, indicate that students who experienced instruction in language learning strategies outperformed those who did not (O'Malley, 1987; Weinstein and Mayer, 1986). Language researchers also indicate that language teachers should not only teach about the language but also teach learners how to learn (e.g., Dickinson, 1994; Nunan, 1996; Oxford, 1990).

The findings of the above studies have motivated the discussion and investigation on whether language learning strategies taught prior to undertaking language learning in a self-access center promote a better use of the self-access center. This has been an issue since more and more EFL providers have established self-access centers as a component of language education, particularly in non-English speaking countries. Therefore, the effectiveness and visibility of such centers will be worth investigating.

The basic questions arising from the establishment of self-access centers are: firstly, how to create an effective self-access center, and secondly, is self-access learning mode suitable for Indonesian learners? These have been major issues as the majority of Indonesian students have always learnt language in a context where a "guru" (an expert) is always on the spot and the teaching and learning have always been held in a formal classroom context (This tradition has been a great obstacle to the development of language learning in the self-access center in the university where the study was conducted).

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY INSTRUCTION

Identification of the learning strategies used by good language learners has raised a wider issue to explore in the area of language learning. The identification of the learning strategies used by successful language learners opens up the possibility of teaching them to the less successful learners (e.g., Chamot *et al.*, 1996; Cresswell, 2000; Dadour & Robbins, 1996; Griffiths & Parr, 2001; Hurd, 1999; Lam & Wong, 2000; Little, 1995; McDonough, 1995; McDevitt, 1997; Nunan, 1996; Setiyadi, 1999; Ronesi, 2001; Wenden, 1991). These researchers, in general, indicated that language learning strategies can be taught.

Although language researchers, in general, agree that the language learning strategies can be taught, there are two different opinions on how to conduct learning strategy instruction. On the one hand, there are those who suggest that it is important to undertake learning strategy instruction on metacognitive or cognitive strategies (e.g., Brown & Baker, 1986). On the other hand, some researchers hold that it is more effective to instruct learners in the use of a combination of learning strategies to enhance learning (e.g., O'Malley, 1987; Oxford, 1990; Purpura, 1997; Wenden,

1987). Instruction on a combination of the learning strategies seems to have been proved to gain better results (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Therefore, it was decided to instruct learners on the use of both the cognitive and the metacognitive strategies that have previously been classified as effective strategies in the Indonesian tertiary education context to promote effective use of the self-access center in the university. The method of the instruction was adopted from one of the proposed standard techniques for learning strategies instruction (Oxford, 1990).

In line with the issue of the possibility of teaching language learning strategies, researchers have proposed some possible techniques to teach learning strategies. Three techniques are proposed: 1) blind, 2) informed, and 3) self-controlled (Brown & Pelincsar, 1982). The basic difference among the three techniques lies in whether the trainees are informed about the importance of the strategies or not. Brown & Pelincsar (1982, pp. 4-5) claimed that in the blind training trainees are left in the dark about the importance of the activities to which they are being introduced. In the informed training techniques, instruction in the significance of the trained activity is involved. And in the self-control mode training in the target activities is supplemented with the provision of information about the activity and its effect.

Most learning strategy instruction has applied either the blind or the informed learning strategy instruction techniques. In the blind techniques, learners can be assisted to work with a set of learning materials. Although the blind technique could assist learners in doing a specific task, the technique does not allow for the transfer of the learning strategies to a new set of problems found in new learning materials. In other words, the technique does not lead learners to alter the method they are familiar with, if new problems occurred in a new learning task (see, for example, Brown & Campione, 1978). Dadour & Robbins (1996) explicitly state that with the blind techniques in learning strategy instruction there is no transfer of strategy use to new tasks, and thus there is no development of independent learning and little opportunity for students to become independent learners. On the other hand, Dadour & Robbins (1996) indicate that the application of the informed learning strategy techniques made learners aware of the importance of each component of learning activities during the completion of the language tasks. When the learners become familiar with the importance of the activities and their contribution to the completion of learning tasks, learners become aware of the advantage of the employment of the strategies, and consequently the language learners might extend the use of the strategies to other learning tasks (Paris *et al.*, 1981).

Therefore, the use of the informed techniques has been recommended in the language learning strategy instruction (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Paris *et al.*, 1981, 1982; Wenden, 1991). These researchers seem to

agree that the application of informed techniques in instruction of learning strategies opens up the possibility of leading learners to autonomous learning as this technique allows the transfer of the learning strategies to new language tasks (e.g., Dadour & Robbin, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991).

METHOD

Subject

The subjects of the study were 126 first year non-language department students registering for General English, a compulsory course at the Language Training Centre (LTC) at a university in Indonesia.

Sampling Technique

The students in the present study were match-sampled by assigning them into two groups. One group is called the experimental group, consisting of 63 students and the other, the control group, consisting of 63 students. The experimental group was given instruction in the use of effective language learning strategies before they use the self-access centre, while the control group was assigned only to do self-access language learning in the self-access centre.

Instruments

There were three instruments used to collect the data in the study:

1. Proficiency tests in English (pre-test and post-test)
2. Observations
3. Interviews

Procedure

Pre-test Administration

At the beginning of the program, an EFL proficiency test was administered to the subjects. The test was a TOEFL-like test that has been used as a placement test in the language centre of the university where this study was conducted. For the purpose of the study, this test was referred to as the Pre-test. The overall score of the test was used to determine the English language proficiency level of the subject, whether a student would be in the high, middle or low EFL proficiency group. The results of the test

indicated that there were 30 students (28%) in high EFL proficiency, 45 students (35.7%) in the middle EFL proficiency, and 51 students (40.5%) in the low EFL proficiency.

Treatment

After assigning the subjects to experimental and control groups, treatment in the form of language learning strategy instruction was given (An example of the tasks on each of the four skills can be seen in the Appendix A). As described below, ten frequently used (effective) language learning strategies reported as being used by Indonesian tertiary education EFL students (Setiyadi, 1999) were taught to the students in the experimental group for eight weeks while doing language learning tasks in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Informed training techniques developed by Oxford (1990) were used to introduce the language learning strategies to the students. The sequence of the training technique can be described as follows: first, students try a language task without any training in the target strategy, and they comment on the strategies they spontaneously used to do the task; second, the teacher explains and demonstrates the new strategy; third, the learners apply the new strategy to the same language task as before or a similar one; finally, the teacher evaluates the strategy training (Oxford, 1990, pp. 205-208).

Language learning strategies instructed were:

Four metacognitive strategies:

- *I correct the mistakes that I produced orally*
- *I read my writing and correct the mistakes*
- *I notice my English mistakes, and use that information to help me do better*
- *If I cannot understand a reading passage, I try to analyse what difficulty I actually have*

Three deep level cognitive strategies:

- *I write sentences to apply certain rules*
- *I write a message to a friend for practice*
- *While I read a text, I try to anticipate a story line*

Three surface level cognitive strategies:

- *I pick out key words and repeat them to myself*
- *I ask questions in English; if I don't understand the content of a passage, I ask my friend or my teacher for help*
- *I mix Indonesian words and English in writing (Setiyadi, 1999).*

Post-test

After completing the treatment, a post-test was administered to both the experimental and the control groups. The test used for the post test was the one used for the pre test.

Observation

Twelve students were observed. They were selected from both the experimental and the control groups. Six of the students were from the experimental group and the other six were from the control group, in which two were from the high EFL proficiency, two from the middle, and two from the low EFL proficiency. The observation took place when the students were undertaking language learning in the self-access centre. They were focused on the language learning strategies the students manifested during their individual language study in the self-access centre.

It would be better if all samples of the study were observed during the language learning in the self-access centre. However, for the reason of intensity and accuracy of the language learning strategies manifested by the different EFL proficiency level, it was decided to observe only two students of each EFL proficiency level from both the experimental and the control groups. The students of each EFL proficiency level were observed every time they studied in the self-access centre. The observed activities were noted (The observation sheet used can be seen in Appendix B).

Interview

Interviews were conducted to the observed students to investigate language learning strategies used in the self-access centre. Interviews were intended to support the data from the questionnaire and to investigate whether there were other strategies used other than those reported in the questionnaire and observation (An example of the result of the interview can be seen in Appendix C).

Data Analysis

The data in the study were analyzed statistically using SPSS 10.0 for Windows.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Effects of Language Learning Strategy Instruction on Each Skill Area

The results of the data analyses in this part address the following question: Is there an improvement as a result of the learning strategy instruction that affects each skill area differently (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)?

To investigate the effects of language learning strategy instruction on each skill area, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, four ANCOVAs were computed. The results of the four ANCOVAs can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of the results of the four ANCOVAs on the effect of the treatment on the improvement in the EFL performance in each skill area.

Language skill	Df	F	P
Listening	1	31.170	.000
Speaking	1	36.232	.000
Reading	1	86.174	.000
Writing	1	33.301	.000

The results of the ANCOVAs, as can be seen in Table 1, indicate that there was a significant improvement in the EFL performance in listening, speaking, reading, and writing as a result of the learning strategy instruction. Thus, it is clear that the students in the experimental group significantly outperform the students in the control group in the four language skills. The data in the above table were calculated from the whole population of the study (63 ss in the experimental group and 63 ss in the control one).

Language Learning Strategies in the Self-Access Centre

Language Learning Strategies Taught

Even though the students in the control group did not receive instruction on the language learning strategies, they were reported and observed using some of these strategies when they undertook language learning individually in the self-access centre. The results, as can be seen in

Table 2, indicate that the learning strategies taught were used by both of the students in the experimental and the control group.

Table 2: The frequency of use of learning strategies taught

Taught Strategy		Experimental Group			Control Group		
		Frequency			Frequency		
Item no.	Description	H	M	L	H	M	L
1	<i>I correct the mistakes that I produced orally</i>	2	2	2	0	2	1
2	<i>I read my writing and correct the mistakes</i>	2	2	1	0	1	1
3	<i>I notice my English mistakes, and use that information to help me do better</i>	2	2	1	2	1	0
4	<i>If I cannot understand a reading passage, I try to analyse what difficulty I actually have</i>	1	1	0	1	0	0
5	<i>I write sentences to apply certain rules</i>	1	1	1	1	0	0
6	<i>I write a message to a friend for practice</i>	1	0	0	1	0	0
7	<i>While I read a text, I try to anticipate a story line</i>	3	2	2	2	2	2
8	<i>I pick-out key words and repeat them to myself</i>	2	2	2	2	1	2
9	<i>I ask questions in English; if I don't understand the content of a passage, I ask my friend or my teacher for help</i>	3	3	2	3	3	2
10	<i>I mix Indonesian words and English in writing</i>	0	2	2	0	2	2

H = High proficiency student
 M = Middle proficiency student
 L = Low proficiency student

0 = never
 1 = once
 2 = sometimes
 3 = frequently

Language Learning Strategies not Taught

The investigation in this section was intended to explore whether there were other observed language learning strategies or language learning strategies reported through the interviews used in the self-access centre, which may have contributed to the improvement in the EFL performance at the end of the program. Table 3 shows learning strategies that were

classified as not taught reported by the high, middle and the low EFL proficiency learners in the experimental and the control groups.

Table 3: The frequency of the use of the language learning strategies not taught and not found in the SILL questionnaire

Not taught and found in SILL (Other)		Experimental Group			Control Group		
		Frequency			Frequency		
Strategy no.	Description	H	M	L	H	M	L
1	Consulting the provided answer key and comparing the answer sheet	3	3	3	3	3	3
2	Discussing pictures following reading text before reading and doing the comprehension questions	2	1	0	1	1	0
3	Looking up meaning of difficult words in the bilingual dictionary	0	3	3	0	3	3
4	Asking friends to play games	0	2	2	0	2	1
5	Drawing objects in paper to explain difficult words during conversations	0	1	1	0	1	1
6	Reading dialogues from a book outloud	0	2	3	0	1	3

H = High proficiency student

M = Medium proficiency student

L = Low proficiency student

0 = never

1 = once

2 = sometimes

3 = frequently

Inspection of the data in Table 3 shows that there are six language learning strategies other than those taught used by the two groups of students in language learning in the self-access centre.

Discussion

Language Learning Strategy Instruction and Improvement on EFL Performance

Previous studies in language learning strategy instruction have mostly been done in classroom settings (Chamot *et al.*, 1996; Lam & Wong, 2000). In general, researchers have reported that the students who attended strategy instruction outperformed those who did not (e.g., Chamot *et al.*, 1996; Lam & Wong, 2000; Nunan, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991). Although quite a few studies have reported the effect of language learning strategies, very few studies took place in self-access centres (Ashton, 1993; McDevitt, 1997).

I argue that instruction in the use of language learning strategies to the students before they undertake individual language learning in the self-

access centre contributes to their improvement in EFL performance. Although the language learning strategy instruction and the self-access language learning took place only for a short period of time in this study, in addition to the formally scheduled EFL learning, the EFL performance of the students in both groups improved.

The results of the language learning strategy instruction in the present study indicate that students in the experimental group benefited from the language learning strategy instruction. The findings are consistent with what has been reported in the investigation of the effects of learning strategy training in EFL learning, that is, the learners improve their EFL performance at the end of the learning strategy instruction (Brown & Baker 1986; Chamot *et al.*, 1996; Lam & Wong, 2000; Nunan, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Prokop, 1989; Tuener, 1983; Weinstein & Mayer, 1986; Wenden, 1991). A comparison with the results of similar studies in the self-access language learning mode would have been interesting had there been any similar study undertaken in the previous research measuring EFL performance.

The findings of this study suggest that learning strategies should be introduced to self-access centre users before a teacher assigns students to do language learning in the self-access centre, and that training in the form of language learning strategy instruction could be undertaken in order to make effective use of the self-access centres. This can be done by introducing effective learning strategies at the beginning of English courses or before students make use of the self-access centres.

Learning Strategies Used in the Self-Access Centre and Improvement in EFL Performance

I argue that the greater frequency of the use of particular learning strategies of the language learning strategies taught and language learning strategies not taught (newly described language learning strategies used in language learning in the self-access centre) might also have been possible contributors to the higher improvement in the learners' EFL performance. Analyses of the language learning strategies used in the self-access centre and of the data from the observations and the interviews indicate that the students have benefited from the language learning strategies taught for the improvement of the EFL performance at the end of the program.

Frequency of use of language learning strategies influences success in language learning (Setiyadi, 1999; Sheorey, 1999). Setiyadi (1999, p. 175) argues that the unsuccessful language learners did not improve in their EFL performance due to insufficient use of learning strategies. The findings of the present study also indicate that the greater frequency in the use of

some of the learning strategies taught might have been a possible contributor to the greater improvement in EFL performance at the end of the study.

The results of this study show that the students in the experimental group improved more in their EFL performance than their counterparts in the control group. The greater frequency in the use of seven of the learning strategies taught to the students in the experimental group than by those in the control group could also have contributed to the greater improvement in the EFL performance of the students in the experimental group.

The high EFL proficiency students in the experimental group also show greater improvement in EFL performance than their counterparts in the control group, and this also applied to the middle and the low EFL proficiency students. The greater frequency of use of the three taught learning strategies by the high EFL proficiency students in the experimental group than by their counterparts in the control group (Item 1, *I correct the mistakes that I produced orally*; Item 2, *I read my writing and correct the mistakes*; and Item 7, *While I read a text, I try to anticipate a story line*), with parallel findings for four of the learning strategies taught in the middle EFL proficiency groups (Item 2, *I read my writing and correct the mistakes*; Item 4, *If I cannot understand a reading passage, I try to anticipate a story line*; Item 5, *I write sentences to apply certain rules*; and Item 8, *I pick out key words and repeat them to myself*), and for three learning strategies in the low EFL proficiency groups (Item 1, *I correct the mistakes that I produced orally*; Item 3, *I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better*; and Item 5, *I write sentences to apply certain rules*) could also have contributed to the greater improvement in the EFL performance of the students in the different EFL proficiency in language learning in the self-access centre.

Interestingly, three of the learning strategies taught were used with the same frequency by the students in both experimental and the control groups in the self-access centre. These strategies are:

- *I write a message to a friend for practice*
- *I ask a question in English if I don't understand the content of a passage, I ask my friend or my teacher for help*
- *I mix Indonesian words and English in writing*

Although it was noted that the three strategies were used by the students both in the experimental and the control group in the same frequency, it was noted that the achievement of the students were not the same. Therefore, these three learning strategies taught may be considered as having less potential for improving EFL performance in language learning in the self-access centre.

The findings suggest that not all of the ten learning strategies taught were equally effective for improving EFL performance in a self-access centre, and consequently, it might not be necessary to teach all of the ten strategies to students if they are expected to undertake language learning in a self-access centre.

Frequency and choice of language learning strategies have mostly been investigated in classroom settings in relation to either learners' background or educational setting where the EFL/ESL learning takes place (e.g., Bedell & Oxford, 1996; Levine & Leaver, 1996; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Sheorey, 1999). The results in general indicate that the background of the language learners and the educational settings influence the choice and the frequency of use of the learning strategies. The findings of the present study also indicate that different settings in language learning, other than classroom teaching and learning settings, influence the choice of the learning strategies to enhance language learning. This can be seen from the six learning strategies reported in the interview and the data from the observation during the language learning in the self-access centre. The six strategies were not included in the SILL questionnaire that have mostly been used in the classroom setting (see Appendix D for the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989)).

In this section I argue that there were language learning strategies other than those taught that were reported by the students in both the experimental group and those in the control group in language learning in the self-access centre. These newly described learning strategies may also have contributed to the improvement in the EFL performance in language learning in the self-access centre. Although there were six newly described learning strategies in the self-access centre, only three of them were effective for improving EFL performance.

The greater frequency of use of three newly described learning strategies by the students in the experimental group over those in the control group may also have contributed to their greater improvement in the EFL performance in the present study. The students in the experimental group reported more frequently *discussing the picture following a reading text before reading and doing the comprehension questions* (Item 2), *asking a friend to play games* (Item 4), and *reading out loud a dialogue from a book* (Item 6) (see Table 5.3) than the students in the control group. On the other hand, students in both the experimental and the control groups reported using the same frequency three of the newly described learning strategies in the self-access centre. Although the frequency of the use of the three learning strategies was the same in the students of both groups, the achievement of the students in both groups was significantly different (see

Table 1). Therefore, these learning strategies might be categorized as having less potential for improving EFL performance in a self-access centre.

The findings of this study suggest that although there were six newly described learning strategies used in the self-access centre, not all of the six learning strategies were equally effective for improving EFL performance in language learning in the self-access centre. Although the students in the experimental group and their counterparts in the control group reported using three of the newly described learning strategies with the same frequency, the improvement in the EFL performance at the end of the study was significantly different for the two groups.

The results of this study also indicate that different EFL proficiency students reported the newly described learning strategies differently. First, the high EFL proficiency students in the experimental group reported more frequently *discussing the picture following a reading text before reading and doing the comprehension question* in the self-access centre than their counterparts did in the control group. Second, the middle EFL proficiency students in the experimental group reported more frequently *reading out loud a dialogue from a book* than their counterparts did in the control group in the self-access centre. And third, the low EFL proficiency students in the experimental group reported more frequently *asking friends to play games* than their counterparts did in the control group. The results show that differences in the choice of learning strategies can be seen among the different EFL proficiency levels. The findings of the present study were consistent with the findings in Setiyadi's (1999) study. Setiyadi (1999) argued that elementary students employed lower level strategies more often than intermediate and advanced students, while intermediate and advanced students used higher level strategies classified as metacognitive and deep level cognitive strategies more often.

The results suggest that priority should be given to instruction in the three more effective newly described learning strategies, should language learning strategy instruction be programmed in self-access centers. The findings also imply that the provision of language games in self-access centres should be taken into account.

CONCLUSION

The improvement of the EFL performance of the students in the present study was attributed to the instruction in the use of language learning strategies, the frequency of the use of the taught learning strategies, and the newly described learning strategies used in the self-access centre. The study concludes that not all learning strategies are equally potential to contribute to the improvement of the students' performance. Therefore, should there be interest in instructing learning strategies to promote

autonomous learning, to make effective use of the self-access centers, and to support the teaching of English at the tertiary education context, the instruction of the potential learning strategies is recommended.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

EXAMPLES OF THE TASKS OF THE FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS

Listening Task

Listen to people talking about their meals. Did they enjoy their food? Tick the correct response for each speaker.

	<i>Yes, they like it a lot</i>	<i>Yes, they quite like it</i>	<i>No, they don't like it at all</i>
1. ✓.....
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

(Source: Richard, 1992, p. 16)

Speaking Task

Interviewing a friend

A. You have just completed your senior high school. Now you are studying at a university. You met many new friends. Ask as many questions as possible in English to get the details of a friend.

B. You have just completed your senior high school. Now you are at a university. You met many new friends. You want to know what your friends' hobbies are. Ask your friends what their hobbies are, should you meet one who has the same hobby as you get her/his details.

Reading Task

Direction: *Read the following paragraph and answer the questions about the topic and main idea of the paragraph.*

Do you want to know more about your family history? Maybe a genealogist can help you. A genealogist is specially trained to find information about family histories from many different sources. Some of this information comes from old records, such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, and death certificates. Often the genealogist finds information in old newspapers, tax records, or immigration records. It may even be necessary to visit distant towns and villages to collect information from the people who live there. Once the information is complete, the genealogist writes a genealogy which describes the family's history.

1. What is the topic of this paragraph?
 - a. families
 - b. genealogists
 - c. information about family histories
 - d. writing a genealogy

2. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
 - a. A genealogy describes a family's history
 - b. Genealogists look for information in different places
 - c. Genealogists can find information about family histories
 - d. Information about family histories comes from many different sources

(Source: Ramsay, 1986, p.73)

Writing Tasks

Write a short letter to "Worldwide Pen-friend Service, PO Box 67, Andover, Hampshire, England", to find a pen-friend. Write about yourself and your interests/hobbies.

(Source: Case and Milne, 1985, p. 2)

APPENDIX B:

OBSERVATION SHEET

Observation Sheet

Subject: _____

Skill/Date	Activities & learning strategies used in the self-access	Code 1, 2, or 3

1 = strategies taught

2 = strategies not taught but named in the SILL

3 = strategies not taught and not named in the SILL

APPENDIX C:**OBSERVATION SHEET****Interview Transcript (condensed translation)**

Interview 1 (High EFL proficiency level of the Control group)

- I watch television to practice my listening in the self-access centre.
- I listen to the radio.
- I listen to English songs.
- If I find some difficult words while doing the listening exercise, I consult an English-Indonesian dictionary or ask my friends.
- If I really could not find out the exact meaning of the difficult words from the dictionary or from my friend, I ask for help from the self-access centre staff.
- I compare my answer to the available answer keys after I complete a self-access listening exercise, and the answer keys help me to measure my progress. If I can answer most of the exercises correctly, I am very happy.
- I usually talk in English to my close friends in the self-access centre.
- I ask questions in English to the self-access centre staff to find out the location of books or self-access materials. This is a good way to practice for me because the self-access centre staff can speak in English, too.
- I read the questions following the reading materials first, then the text itself.
- If I find a difficult word in a text, I read the whole sentence or paragraph then I try to guess the meaning from the context.
- I try to guess the purpose of the reading passage and the story line by observing the pictures following or available in the reading text.
- I compare my answer to the provided answer keys after completing the self-access reading exercises and sometimes I compare with the answer of my friends.
- I start doing a simple writing exercise.
- I think of the topic that I want to write about and then choose the suitable vocabulary.
- I read again what I have written and I try to correct mistakes found in the writing exercise if I can.

APPENDIX D:

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

(Adapted from SILL version 7.0 (ESL/EFL) by Oxford, 1989)

Direction

This form of the STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language. You will find statements about learning English. Please read each 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 of you less than half the time.

SOMEWHAT 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 of you 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, or what other people do. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Put your answer 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.

Example

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

Read the item, and choose a response (1 through 5 as above), and write it in the space after the item.

I actively seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers of English. _____

You have just completed the example item. Answer the rest of the items on the Worksheet.

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)
Version for Speakers of Other Languages Learning English
Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)
(Adapted from Oxford, 1990)

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

(Write your answers on the worksheet)

Part A

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.

Part B

10. I say or write new English words several times.
11. I try to talk like native speakers.
12. I practice the sounds of English.
13. I use the English words I know in different ways.
14. I start conversations in English.
15. I watch English language TV shows 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 over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.

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

(Write your answers on the worksheet)

19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.
20. I try to find patterns 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.

Part C

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 do not 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 next in English.
29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.

Part D

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 is 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.

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

(Write your answers on the worksheet)

Part E

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 feelings in a language learning diary.
44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.

Part F

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.