

The Autonomous Learners' Language Learning Strategies at Senior High Schools in Coastal Areas of Riau Province - Indonesia

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Abstract: This study focuses on examining the use of Language Learning Strategies (LLS) by autonomous learners at senior high schools in relation to the type of school and academic factors in Dumai, Bengkalis, and Selat Panjang (coastal areas). The study also concentrates on the preferred by ways operated by the selected respondents to master general English, four language skills, vocabulary, and structure. The target groups of the research are autonomous learners (more or less 3000 students) from state senior high schools in three different small towns. Due to the homogenous characters of the target groups; academic achievement, age, and learning motivation, the sample is taken randomly as big as 10% out of the population. To collect the needed data quantitatively, the strategy inventory for language learning (SILL) (Oxford 1990) is applied, and for the qualitative data, an interview is conducted to 60 selected learners out of the sample. To analyze the quantitative data, descriptive and inferential statistics are used and for the qualitative data, listing the preferred ways are made accordingly. The findings reveal that the various LLS are used based on academic and types of school backgrounds. The social strategy is the highest use of LLS (402) among other strategies (memory, cognition, compensation, metacognition, and affection). The qualitative findings exist in the body of this article (table 6 – through table 8). The suggestion is that LLS would be better to be well instructed and discussed in the classroom.

Keywords: *Language learning strategies, and autonomous learners.*

INTRODUCTION

Dumai, Bengkalis, and Selatpanjang (coastal areas) in Riau Province are directly abutted on two nearest-neighboring countries (Malaysia and Singapura) where the status of English is as a second language in these countries. The countries use English as a language for official as well as trade, legal, and social affairs. The societies who live around the border area are connected each other in various activities either in a formal state agenda or daily activities. Therefore, English as an international language is chosen as a way of communication.

High school students, as a part of society who live in the seaboard of Riau Province (Dumai, Bengkalis, and Selat Panjang), play an important role in term of association

between various cities in Riau province with the communities in the two neighboring countries. In this case, autonomous learners whose English achievements are up to eight until ten are basically able to communicate in English even though they have various difficulties in organizing words into sentences, choosing appropriate words, and setting the sentence intonation.

Language learning strategies have been used by the autonomous learners to solve their learning difficulties and to improve their capability of four language skills, vocabulary, and grammar in school. The students often do some common ways like; a. seriously following the procedures of the learning process, b. asking a further explanation of any unclear materials, c. completing various tasks related to the topic, d. intensifying group discussions (Fakhri Ras; 2012), e. using new vocabulary in context, f. correcting errors made by classmates, g. sharing ideas in composing texts, h. accumulating important ideas before writing the texts.

Based on the above phenomena, language learning strategies used by autonomous learners must be thoroughly identified by using a valid measurement. In this case, strategy inventory for language learning (SILL) (Oxford; 1990) was used as an effective test (quantitative data). The obvious and measured recognition of language learning strategies can influence on autonomous learners' language achievement. To identify the relationship between the strategies and the achievement, weak students' language learning strategies are used as the comparison. Besides, the use of SILL is empowered by some questions in interview section (qualitative data). The combination between those two kinds of data collection techniques is expected to obviously identify the strategies used by the autonomous learners in this research area dealing with the insight of language learning strategies, related definitions have been formulated.

As formulated by Tarone (1983) that the meaning conscious is regarded as a key point between two or more interlocutors in carrying out a communication activity. In her studies, there are several terminologies deal with the communication itself; communication strategies, production strategies, and learning strategies.

In line with the learning strategies, a series of definition on LLS has been made by several experts. Each expert has core point in his / her definition. For example, Rubin formulates the LLS definition at two different times - 1975 – 1987. Rubin (1975) focuses on the techniques on the device used by the learner to acquire the second language knowledge. The following ideas are that Rubin (1987) refers to sets of operations, steps, plans and routines to ease the acquisition, storage, and use of information to do learning process in order to engage with the second language naturally.

Similar to what has been made by Rubin, Stern (1975) argues that good order of approach is needed to lead the specific techniques to acquire and learn a second language. A little bit similar to the Stern's focus, Chammot (1987) also uses techniques approaches and certain actions to learn linguistic and content of area information.

In addition, Lan (2005) acknowledges that LLS is relatively easy to change, change based on learners' learning style, effective or ineffective for specific situations, and often under some level of conscious control.

Focusing on elements which are available in LLS, various experts have set up certain factors that should be existing in the LLS. For example, Wenden (1987) put six elements in LLS; a) specific actions or techniques, b) observable activities, c) problem orientation, d) direct or indirect contribution to learning, e) automatic application after prolonged and separated ways and f) behaviors are unable to change. The six elements go hand in hand when learners do the learning process of the language.

In line with what has been stated earlier, O' Malley & Chamot (1990) ascertains three elements in LLS; cognitive, and socio-affective while Oxford (1996) sets six components in her broad LLS; memory, cognition, compensation, metacognition, affection, and social. The six strategies are grouped into two big parts direct strategies and indirect strategies. Similarly, Cohen (1996) purposes four elements that should be available in LLS, a) explicit goal of the learners, b) cognitive, c) language performance, d) metacognitive, affective and social.

Dealing with the earlier LLS elements, several models of LLS have also been compounded. The model of LLS is set up by Oxford (1990 b) contain the most classification of LLS developed so far, clearly different from other models. The Oxford's model, a little bit, overlaps with that of O' Malley (1990) to a great extent. The overlapping is on cognitive strategies seems to cover both cognitive and memory strategies in Oxford's. Moreover, while O' Malley puts socio-affective strategies in one category, Oxford puts the six strategies into two parts; direct and indirect strategies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research conducted in coastal areas of Riau Province (Dumai, Bengkalis, and Selatpanjang) Indonesia, was done in 2013. The target group of the study was all autonomous learners as many as 3000 students. Due to the homogenous character of the population (age, academic achievement, and learning motivation), the sample was taken randomly as big as 10 % out of the population (300 students). To collect the needed qualitative data, 60 selected students were taken to be interviewed. Strategy inventory of language learning (SILL) was used to determine the strategies used in learning English at state senior high schools. It was accompanied by a series of questions for further information on how the respondents learn general English, listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and structure. The collected quantitative data were analyzed by applying descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The collected qualitative data were listed in order based on the most preferred strategies to the least one.

THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Quantitative Findings

Ho 1; There is no significant difference in language learning usage by Academic Stream.

Table 1: The Distribution of Respondents by Academic Background

No	Academic Stream	Frequency	Percent
1	Natural Science	105	35.0
2	Social Science	105	35.0
3	Language Science	90	30.0
Total		300	100.0

Table 2: The Distribution of Respondents by Type of School

No	Type of School	Frequency	Percent
1	State School	150	50.0
2	Private School	150	50.0
Total		300	100.0

The collected quantitative data are analyzed by applying the descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics is used to determine the mean of the LLS usage. Determining the different use of LLS in relation to academic stream and type of school, the inferential statistics is used. Then, the qualitative data are presented in the form of a list of strategies to learn general English, the four language skills, vocabulary, and structure.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA of Academic Stream across Language Learning Strategies

Dependent Variable	Stream	Mean	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Memory	Natural	3.49	Between Groups	1.406	2	.703	8.448	.000
	Social	3.41	Within Groups	33.044	397	.083		
	Language	3.56	Total	34.450	399			
	Total	3.48						

Cognitive	Natural	3.73	Between Groups	.805	2	.403	5.924	.003
	Social	3.68	Within Groups	26.979	397	.068		
	Language	3.79	Total	27.785	399			
Total								
Compensation	Natural	3.71	Between Groups	.357	2	.179	1.440	.238
	Social	3.67	Within Groups	49.259	397	.124		
	Language	3.74	Total	49.616	399			
Total								
Metacognitive	Natural	3.95	Between Groups	1.865	2	.932	6.939	.001
	Social	3.90	Within Groups	53.338	397	.134		
	Language	4.07	Total	55.202	399			
Total								
Affective	Natural	3.66	Between Groups	.109	2	.055	.431	.650
	Social	3.67	Within Groups	50.331	397	.127		
	Language	3.70	Total	50.440	399			
Total								
Social	Natural	4.00	Between Groups	.044	2	.022	.192	.825
	Social	4.03	Within Groups	45.457	397	.115		
	Language	4.02	Total	45.501	399			
Total								
LLS	Natural	3.75	Between Groups	.642	2	.321	7.052	.001
	Social	3.71	Within Groups	18.060	397	.045		
	Language	3.81	Total	18.701	399			
Total								

Table 3 presents the result of One-Way ANOVA of academic stream. The findings show that there is no significant difference by academic stream in memory ($F = .707$, $\text{sig.} = .588$ [$> .05$]), compensation ($F = .833$, $\text{sig.} = .505$ [$> .05$]), metacognitive ($F = .999$, $\text{sig.} = .408$ [$> .05$]), affective ($F = 1.600$, $\text{sig.} = .173$ [$> .05$]), and social strategy ($F = .605$, $\text{sig.} = .659$ [$> .05$]). However, there are significant differences by academic stream in cognitive strategy ($F = 2.736$, $\text{sig.} = .029$ [$< .05$]) and overall language learning strategies ($F = 2.638$, $\text{sig.} = .034$ [$< .05$]). Thus, H_01 is rejected. Post-Hoc test results are displayed in table 4.

Tabel 4
Post-Hoc Test of One-Way ANOVA on the Differences in Language Learning Strategies between Students according to Academic Stream

Dependent Variable	(I) Stream	(J) Stream	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Memory	Natural	Social	.07714*	.03448	.026
		Language	-.06998	.03589	.052
	Social	Natural	-.07714*	.03448	.026
		Language	-.14712*	.03589	.000
	Language	Natural	.06998	.03589	.052
		Social	.14712*	.03589	.000
Cognitive	Natural	Social	.04807	.03116	.124
		Language	-.06349	.03243	.051
	Social	Natural	-.04807	.03116	.124
		Language	-.11156*	.03243	.001
	Language	Natural	.06349	.03243	.051
		Social	.11156*	.03243	.001
Metacognitive	Natural	Social	.05250	.04381	.231
		Language	-.11482*	.04560	.012
	Social	Natural	-.05250	.04381	.231
		Language	-.16732*	.04560	.000
	Language	Natural	.11482*	.04560	.012
		Social	.16732*	.04560	.000

LLS	Natural	Social	.03671	.02549	.151
		Language	-.06236*	.02653	.019
	Social	Natural	-.03671	.02549	.151
		Language	-.09907*	.02653	.000
	Language	Natural	.06236*	.02653	.019
		Social	.09907*	.02653	.000

As shown in table 4, there is a significant difference in using memory strategies between social and natural majors. (DF = -.14712, sig. = .000 [$<.05$]). Besides, a significant difference also occurs in cognitive strategy between social and language students (DF = -.11156, sig. = .001 [$<.05$]). Moreover, the language students use metacognitive strategy more often than natural students (DF = -.11482, sig. = .012 [$<.05$]) and social students (DF = -.16732, sig. = .000 [$<.05$]). Similarly, the language students use overall strategy more often than the natural (DF = -.06236, sig. = .019 [$<.05$]) and social students (DF = -.09907, sig. = .000 [$<.05$]). Therefore, Thus, Ho1 is rejected. In addition Ho 2; There is no significant difference of language learning usage by Type of School.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA of Type of School across Language Learning Strategies

Variable	Type of School	Mean	Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Memory	State	3.47	Between Groups	.029	1	.029	.330	.566
	Private	3.49	Within Groups	34.421	398	.086		
	Total	3.48	Total	34.450	399			
Cognitive	State	3.74	Between Groups	.042	1	.042	.609	.436
	Private	3.72	Within Groups	27.742	398	.070		
	Total	3.73	Total	27.785	399			
Compensation	State	3.68	Between Groups	.284	1	.284	2.288	.131
	Private	3.73	Within Groups	49.333	398	.124		
	Total	3.70	Total	49.616	399			
Metacognitive	State	3.94	Between Groups	.312	1	.312	2.266	.133
	Private	4.00	Within Groups	54.890	398	.138		
	Total	3.97	Total	55.203	399			

Affective	State	3.61	Between Groups	1.797	1	1.797	14.703	.000
	Private	3.74	Within Groups	48.643	398	.122		
	Total	3.68	Total	50.440	399			
Social	State	4.03	Between Groups	.098	1	.098	.856	.355
	Private	4.00	Within Groups	45.403	398	.114		
	Total	4.02	Total	45.501	399			
LLS	State	3.74	Between Groups	.068	1	.068	1.444	.230
	Private	3.77	Within Groups	18.634	398	.047		
	Total	3.75	Total	18.701	399			

Table 5 displays the result of One-Way ANOVA of type of school. The findings reveal that there is no significant difference by both state and private school in memory ($F = .330$, sig. = .566 [$> .05$]), cognitive ($F = .609$, sig. = .436 [$> .05$]), compensation ($F = 2.288$, sig. = .131 [$> .05$]), metacognitive ($F = 2.266$, sig. = .133 [$> .05$]), social ($F = .856$, sig. = .355 [$> .05$]), and overall language strategies ($F = 1.444$, sig. = .230 [$< .05$]).

However, there is a significant difference by type of school in affective strategy ($F = 14.703$, sig. = .000 [$< .05$]). ($F = 2.736$, sig. = .029 [$< .05$]). The private school students use affective strategy more often than the state school students. Therefore, H_0 is rejected.

Qualitative Findings

First of all, the general English is commonly learned by the respondents from academic stream and type of school in various ways which suit to the essence of the problems faced by the learners. For detail, the preferred ways can be seen the following table 6.

Table 6: Strategies used by autonomous learners to learn English in General

Factor	Indicator	Strategy
Academic Stream	Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The English language is being used in discussion session with teacher and friends in the classroom Taking English course outside schoolhouses
	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving writing, reading, listening, speaking, vocabulary, and grammar skills of English language Using the English language in the Classroom whenever possible Joining an English course Forming a group of English studying

	Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking an English lesson outside of school.
Type of School	State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning English intensively outside and inside schools. • Joining an English club • Using the English language in the classroom wherever possible • Taking an English course outside of school
	Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving writing, reading, listening, speaking, vocabulary, and grammar skills of English language • Getting involved in activities of improving the English language

Then, the respondents also use various activities to learn the four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing, vocabulary and structure) in relation to the academic stream background (natural, social, and language). The detail ways can be seen in table 7.

Table 7: Strategies used by autonomous learners to four language skills, vocabulary, and structure by Academic Stream

Variable	Strategies by Academic Stream		
	Natural science	Social science	Language science
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrating on the spoken text • Doing exercise at home • Giving suggestion and criticism • Listening to the English songs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing exercise of listening materials • Finding the speaker's idea • Taking notes while listening to the speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking tests of English listening (TOEFL, TOEIC, Etc) • Focusing on the oral text • Concentrating on speakers, ideas' • Gaining as many as vocabulary items • Enjoying English Movies
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the vocabulary items • Participating in English community • Paying attention to teachers' aims • Practicing speaking with native speaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the English language as much as possible with native speakers • Participating in English talk • Using the English Language whenever 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the English language wherever and whenever possible • Learning the English language outside school • Doing self-practice of

		possible	English at home • Enjoying learning English pronunciation
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grasping the ideas of English novel • Focusing on the text to answer the question • Sharing reading ideas in group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on the text to answer the question • Using dictionary to check the meaning of certain words • Taking notes on any vocabulary matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing reading ideas in group • Focusing on the text to answer the question • Consulting to teachers about ways of understanding text • Reading English books • Paying attention to certain words in a text
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making diary in English • Composing a fun story in English • Constructing sentences which relate to a certain topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a short story in English • Enhancing the vocabulary mastery • Learning to construct a good text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making diary in English • Composing a fun story in English • Constructing sentences which relate to a certain topic • Improving writing errors
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning certain vocabulary items every day • Finding the unfamiliar words as much as possible • Paying attention to the several English texts • Correcting mistakes • Improving vocabulary through friendzone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying attention to the several English texts • Practicing English vocabulary with friends • Writing notes of important vocabulary • Improving vocabulary through friendzone • Writing notes of interesting vocabulary items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding the unfamiliar words as many as possible • Learning certain vocabulary items every day
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correcting Mistakes • Taking English course • Doing exercises of structure regularly • Having as many as possible the book of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing exercises of structure regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sentences based on the correct structure of English language • Correcting Mistakes • Taking English course

	structure • Constructing a good text with correct structure		• Doing exercises of structure regularly • Finding sources of structure materials • Discussing structure lessons with English teachers and friends • Improving the English language to construct a good sentence • Consulting to teachers' and talk with friends about the structure material
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The respondents from two types of school (state and private school) also have various ways to learn the four language skills, vocabulary and structure. Table 8 displays the detail ways to master those skills and language components.

Table 8: Strategies used by autonomous learners to four language skills, vocabulary, and structure by Type of School

Variable	Strategies by Type of School	
	State	Private
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking notes while listening to the speakers • Concentrating on the spoken text • Doing exercise at home • Giving suggestion and criticism • Listening to the English songs • Concentrating on the spoken text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking tests of English listening (TOEFL, TOEIC, Etc) • Finding the speaker's idea • Concentrating on the spoken text • Taking notes while listening to the speakers • Concentrating on speakers, ideas • Gaining as many as vocabulary items • Enjoying English Movies
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriching the vocabulary items • Practicing speaking with native speaker • Participating in English community • Paying attention to teachers' aims • Practicing speaking with native 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining conversation course of English • Trying to speak English as often as possible • Using the English language as much as possible with native speakers • Using the English Language

	speaker	whenever possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoying learning English pronunciation
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grasping the ideas of English novel • Focusing on the text to answer the question • Using dictionary to check the meaning of certain words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the vocabulary mastery to improve reading comprehension • Focusing on the text to answer the question • Paying attention to teachers' aims
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriching vocabulary mastery • Learning to construct a good text • Using correct grammatical English whenever possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using correct English whenever possible • Improving writing errors • Constructing sentences which relate to a certain topic
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning certain vocabulary items every day • Finding the meaning of unfamiliar words • Finding the unfamiliar words as many as possible • Paying attention to the certain meaning words • Improving vocabulary through friendzone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding the meaning of unfamiliar words • Memorizing at least 10 new vocabularies every day • Reading English texts as many as possible • Practicing English vocabulary with friends • Writing notes of important vocabulary • Finding antonym or synonym of difficult words
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correcting Mistakes • Participating in community of English grammar • Concentrating to construct a good text with correct structure • Having as much as possible the book of structure • Consulting to teachers' and talk with friends about the structure components 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing exercises of structure regularly • Finding sources of structure materials • Discussing structure lessons with English teachers and friends • Improving the English language to construct good sentences • Participating in community of English grammar • Consulting to teachers' and talk with friends about the structure material

DISCUSSION

The study which contains two types of data (quantitative and qualitative data) reflects the entire effort of the respondents to master the English language in coastal areas of Riau Province Indonesia. First of all, the use of SILL ranges from 3.48 to 4.02 (medium to high level) shows the uses of the respondents to apply six kinds of strategies (memory, cognition, compensation, metacognition, affection and social). The facts indicate that the findings are a little bit higher than that of what has been done by the whole senior students from all over Riau Province (Fakhri Ras; 2012).

As shown from table 3 to table 5, in general, this study has revealed the relationship between academic major and LLS use. This is in line with what has been concluded by Politzer and McCoarty (1985). Their findings are that the engineering/science versus social science and humanities have significant effect strategy choice of ESL students in which engineer students avoid strategies that are deemed "positive" to achieved communicative language proficiency.

In addition, Rao Zhenhui (2005) concluded the similar results in relation to academic major in which the overall strategy used by the social science students (mean = 3.06 medium) than that by the natural science students (means = 2.96 – medium). However, the social science students use two of the six strategies more after that the natural science students; compensation and metacognition.

Afterward, there is no significant difference between both state and private school in use of six strategies memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, social, and overall language strategies. Fakhri Ras (2016) state that the use of LLS usage by the successful students in Riau and Riau Archipelago Province based on the types of school. The mean score of state school (3.2770) is higher than that of private school (3.2524) of the successful students in Riau Archipelago Province. The mean score of private school (3.2694) is higher than that of state school (3.2460) of the successful students in Riau Province. In addition, they prefer various strategies to improve their ability of listening (following tests of English listening / TOEFL and TOEIC), speaking (practicing speaking with native speaker), reading (discussing reading tasks in group), writing (writing diary by using English), vocabulary (finding the meaning of familiar words), and structure (making sentences based on the correct structure of English language). Based on academic stream, language students use more strategies rather than the other two streams. Similarly, viewed from the type of school, the state school students use language learning strategy differently to the private school students. The private students prefer more various strategies to improve their English than the state school students. These findings offer an important input to educators to be able to encourage more effective strategies for the social students as well as those in state schools. The findings also provide some insight into further researches to explore language learning strategies employed by high achievers in a more detailed manner.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is that there is a similar category (high) on the use of six strategies - memory cognition, compensation, metacognition, affection, and social. On the other hand, there is a different usage of the strategies in term of state and private schools. In this context, it would be better to use the six strategies in English classroom by giving the learners clear explanation to use them properly.

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