

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGY AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' THINKING STYLE AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.36841/pioneer.v14i2.2374>

Received : November 6, 2022

Revised : December 21, 2022

Accepted : December 27, 2022

Published : December 31, 2022

Abstract: The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of strategy in studying language toward thinking style in EFL students senior high school students in the South Buton regency. A correlational design was used as the method of this research. There were 50 students from grade eleven involved in this research. The data collection used questionnaires as the instrument for both variables and analyzed using the regression test. This research found that the mean score for language learning strategies was 72.78, which was in the good category and the mean score for thinking style was 74.57, which was also in the good category. The hypothesis testing result indicated language learning strategies are significantly and strongly correlated to thinking style since the score of correlation was 0.775.

Keywords: *language learning strategies, thinking style*

INTRODUCTION

Language teaching works well if there is sufficient knowledge of the characteristics and behavior of learners. There are always successful and less successful learners in the course of instructing and being instructed due to various factors such as students' learning strategies. In this case, the development and improvement of all forms of language education are possible, provided we have sufficient knowledge about the learners and the instructional procedure itself. Thus, knowledge of the characteristics of learners will help to facilitate teaching and learning activities so that learners achieve maximum results as supported by Dewi (2021) who concluded in her research that attitude and personality have a positive influence on students' English achievement.

Language learning strategies are a way in which learners gain, store, experiment, and utilize the information they get. It is also added that language learning strategy is a skill-building exercise that enhances the learning process so that it is more streamlined, efficient, pleasurable, concentrated, successful, and easier to apply in new situations. According to Hamruni (2012), each selected activity, those that provide facilities or aid to students to achieve specific learning goals, can be viewed as a learning strategy. The strategy contains planning, management, and achievement of a goal. In the teaching-learning process, the strategy should be interpreted as a specific behavior used by learners to achieve learning objectives. In addition, Hardan (2013) states that a language learning strategy can be defined as any action, activity, or approach that a learner does to improve or facilitate their language acquisition.

As far as the researchers observed in the English learning process at SMA Negeri 2 Lapandewa, the teacher could not identify the students' thinking styles in the learning process. Students often think about school subject matter without guidance on how to learn effectively and efficiently from teachers, or the teachers can give students time to think about the essence of the lesson the students are studying. The teachers expect students to solve problems but rarely teach them about solving them. And similarly, the teacher asks students to remember a large amount of teaching material but seldom teaches them the art of memorization. The teacher needs to develop the general principles of how to learn, remember, and solve problems, package them in the form of ready-to-apply lessons, and then incorporate these methods into the curriculum.

Thinking styles and language learning strategies are two essential elements of learning. Research conducted by Firdayana *et al.* (2022) at MAN 1 Kolaka observed the relationship between learning strategies in the English language and style of thinking. They focused on the dimension of each variable, in which the thinking styles were limited to internal and external. The strategies of learning observed were limited to metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective. The result indicated that the thinking styles did not significantly correlate to the learning strategies.

On the contrary, the researchers still believe that the positive impact of learning strategy on thinking styles affects the good learning outcome referring to some previous related researchers. Maulani *et al.* (2022) found from their research on the eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Majene that there is a significant connection between methods

of teaching a language and how the students think and that the existence of this connection has a positive impact on learning strategy makes this research urge to conduct. In addition, Balestane *et al.* (2013) who researched Iranian EFL students found that the thinking styles correlated significantly and strongly to the language learning strategies.

Therefore, this research proposes a problem statement: whether there is a positive relationship between students' language learning strategies and thinking style in learning English. Different from the previous research that has been described above, the thinking style in this research involved nine kinds, while the learning strategies consist of three types each direct and indirect strategy.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Learning means a process of behavior change in an individual because of the interaction between an individual and the environment through experience and practice. This change happens overall, including the act of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Iskandarwassid & Sunendar, 2008). The change happens due to the accumulation of someone's experience when interacting with the surrounding neighborhood. The neighborhood also determines if someone acquires a language from baby to adult. An individual's ability to acquire a second language is a lifelong skill that begins at birth and continues with deliberate practice. Language is acquired by someone as they use it to share their inner lives, build connections with others, and attempt to make sense of and bring order to the chaotic world around them. They might already be fluent in more than one language, or they might pick up a new one at school. Each person has a unique first language that should be valued and developed. Mastery of one language will aid in mastery of others.

Students can leave school with the desire to continue to expand their knowledge, skills, and strategies, as well as their interests when they have had positive learning experiences in environments that are rich in language. Because they assist students in learning the language, language learning strategies are of the utmost importance. The students discover that some of the tactics for learning a language apply to their studies, while others might not (Apriani *et al.*, 2017). Language learning strategies assist language teachers in understanding how the students evaluate their current state in the process of studying, planning, and choosing the appropriate skills to comprehend, study, and recall

knowledge while they are in the language classroom. Language-learning practices are generally acknowledged to be an essential component of mastering a foreign language. Learners of a language need to be familiar with their learning processes to improve and advance their skills in a new language (Hismanoglu, 2000). Language acquisition strategies are divided into two primary categories: direct and indirect as follow.

a. Direct Language Learning Strategy

Research conducted by Arisman (2020) who observed the relationship between direct strategy toward English learning proficiency reveals that the direct strategy has a positive relationship toward English learning proficiency. Among three kinds of direct strategies (memory, cognitive, and compensation) he observes, the memory strategy correlates the highest. All direct strategies need the processing of the language in the mind. It is important to note that the three categories of direct methods (memory, cognition, and compensatory) process information in different ways and for distinct objectives. One comes to see that direct tactics are geared at improving students' ability to recognize what is significant, unknown, and uncomfortable for them throughout their education.

1. Memory strategy

Memory strategies, also known as mnemonics, are essential in the process of learning a foreign language when a great amount of information (for example, a huge number of vocabulary) must be retained. The advantages of memory strategy in direct language learning strategies include the creation of mental links, the application of visuals and sounds, the thorough examination of material, and the use of action.

2. Cognitive strategy

Cognitive strategies are more specialized to specific learning tasks and entail more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. They are therefore more expensive to implement. Cognitive strategies provide several advantages, including the skill to perform, accept, and deliver messaging techniques, evaluate and reason, and establish a framework for the data that comes in and that goes out.

3. Compensation strategy

Compensation strategies assist learners in overcoming challenges that arise as a result of certain constraints in their field of expertise. There are two types of compensating mechanisms that have been identified: guessing cleverly receptive skills and overcoming constraints in productive skills. Guessing tactics involve the use of a range

of hints, both linguistic and non - linguistic, to assist learners to guess the meaning when they do not get the meaning of all of the words in a passage or sentence.

b. Indirect Language Learning Strategies

Related to this type of learning strategy, Hayati & Usman (2021) find that three types of indirect language learning strategies (metacognitive, affective, and social) correlate to English academic achievement. In addition, among those kinds of strategies, the metacognitive correlates the highest. Indirect strategies (metacognitive, affective, and social) help to facilitate and direct the acquisition of a language indirectly, that is, without utilizing the language of communication focus as a means of communication in which it is one of the categories of learning ability in addition to critical thinking, creative problem solving, and cooperative working (Aristiawan & Herman, 2021).

Indirect strategies apply to all language situations and four language skills both receptive and productive skills (Oxford, 1990). It concentrates on the psychological climate of the surroundings, which provides the learners with a conducive atmosphere for language learning and facilitates the process.

1. Metacognitive strategy

It can be stated that metacognitive strategies are strategies that require a plan for studying, pondering the instructional activities while it is situated, observing one's generating or understanding while an activity is taking place, and evaluating learning after an activity has been completed. All of these factors might lead to learners being disoriented and even losing interest in their language-learning endeavors. It is believed that to regain the learner's attention, the deliberate use of metacognitive methods, such as paying attention and overviewing/linking with previously learned content, is important.

2. Affective strategy

When talking about effective concepts, we're talking about things like self-esteem, emotions, attitudes, and motivation. It is talking about things like culture shock, inhibition, risk-taking, and tolerance for ambiguity. When it comes to the previously listed aspects, language learners can exert influence over them by using emotive methods. Positive sentiments can make language learning more fun, whilst negative ones can make language learning more difficult. When it comes to good and negative

emotions, the teacher may have a significant influence on the overall mood of the classroom. Not only may instructors' ideas and attitudes impact the method by which students learn a language, but so can students themselves. The instructor may have a big impact on it by altering the social structure of the classroom to give students more responsibility, increasing the quantity of naturalistic communication, and finally, instructing students on how to apply emotional methods in their learning.

3. Social strategy

Language is seen as a social habit since it is used as a means of communication between individuals. Not only is it vital to be a learner, but it is also important to have techniques in place to aid in the language learning process. One of the most important social interactions is asking questions. By asking questions, learners may come closer to the intended meaning, which helps them grasp the material better. When asked questions during a conversation, it displays attention and participation. The discussion partner's reaction also reveals if the question has been comprehended and gives indirect feedback on the learner's ability to produce results. In addition to asking questions, language learners should cooperate with more skilled users of the target language, which is especially useful for beginners.

Based on the explanation above, this research focuses the learning strategy on all types of learning strategies which are included in direct and indirect strategies. The strategies are divided into memory, cognitive, and compensation which are part of the direct strategy, and metacognitive, affective, and social which are part of the indirect strategy. However, this research does not examine the correlation of those learning strategies separately, but they are observed as a unit named language learning strategy.

METHOD

This type of research used a quantitative approach, and the design used in this research was correlational research. It meant knowing whether language learning strategies and thinking styles correlate with each other in grade eleven students at SMAN 2 Lapandewa of South Buton Regency. The population was eleven graders at SMAN 2 Lapandewa, with 50 students from class XI social science. Since the students were less than 100, so this research took all students to be involved as the sample this research.

Questionnaires were employed by the researcher as an instrument to collect data. The questionnaire on language learning strategy was adopted from the SILL for Taiwanese Children (Lan, 2005). Meanwhile, the questionnaire for students' thinking style was adopted from the thinking style inventory (Sternberg & Wagner, 1993), containing 30 items to be answered by students. Two stages of data analysis were used in this research. The first stage was to analyze the data from the instruments. The second stage was the analysis of the research questions. The techniques of data analysis applied in this research were descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The SPSS program 21.0. software is utilized to calculate the scores for both variables. The questionnaire in this research five used a Likert scale with five options the students chose based on what they felt or do. Sugiyono (2014) explained that the Likert scale was a rating system that is used to assess the attitudes, views, and perceptions of a person or group of individuals toward social phenomena and events. In this study, the questionnaire items were rated on a scale from very to disagree to agree, with all of the items in the questionnaire being positively scored. Furthermore, the level of both variables was divided into five levels, distributed into very poor, poor, fair, good, and very good.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive data which are taken from the answers of 50 students as the research sample, the mean is 72.78, the median is 74.00, the mode is 74, the SD is 10.14, the lowest amount is 44.00, and the highest amount is 90.67. The data are also consulted to the scoring category preferred by the students as presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Scoring Category of Language Learning Strategies

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very Good	10	20
Good	35	70
Fair	5	10
Poor	0	0
Very Poor	0	0
Total	50	100

Table 1 above explains that 10 students (20%) are in the very good category, 35 students (70%) are in a good category, 5 students (10%) are in the fair category, 0 student (0%) is in both the poor category and the very poor category. Based on this result, the students had a good learning strategy in English class with a range of 61% - 80% (35

students) since it is the dominant category that the students preferred based on their answers in the questionnaire of language learning strategies.

The questionnaire on thinking style was also distributed to the students to find out the thinking style in learning English. The data obtained indicated that the mean score is 74.57, the median is 73.66, the mode is 68.00, the standard deviation of thinking style is 10.03, the minimum score is 46.67, and the maximum score is 95.33. The data are also consulted in the table of thinking style category as follows:

Table 2. Scoring Category of Thinking Style

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very Good	13	26
Good	34	68
Fair	3	6
Poor	0	0
Very Poor	0	0
Total	50	100

From table 2 above, it is described that 13 students (26%) are in the very good category, 34 students (68%) are in the good category, 3 students (6%) are in the fair category, none of the students (0%) is in poor category and very poor category. From the information above, it is concluded that the student's style of thinking in learning English is in a good category since it is the category that most students preferred.

The data obtained above were then analyzed using Regression testing to determine which hypothesis is accepted or rejected. The result finds that the score of correlation which is symbolized by R was 0.775 and categorized as a strong correlation. It can be said learning strategy in the English language is strongly correlated to thinking style in grade eleven students at SMA Negeri 2 Lapandewa. Besides, the score of R Square is 0.600, which means the contribution of language learning strategies on thinking style in learning English on grade eleven students at SMA Negeri 2 Lapandewa is 60% with another 40% determined by another factor that is not observed in this research.

In addition, the ANOVA test results the F_{count} is 72.105, with a significance score is 0.000. The score of F_{count} is then compared to the score of F_{table} at a significance level is 0.05 or 5%. Since the score of F_{table} is lower than F_{count} , the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Because of $F_{\text{count}} < F_{\text{table}}$ or $0.000 < 0.05$, it is indicated that the regression formula can be used to predict the influence of strategies in

language learning on thinking style in studying English in grade eleven at SMA Negeri 2 Lapandewa.

The data obtained from the regression test reveals that the thinking style score is 1882.580 and the language learning strategy score is 0.766. Those scores are then distributed into the regression formula, that is $Y = 1882.580 + 0.766X$. It means the result of the thinking style itself without the contribution of language learning strategies is 1882.580. While, the score of language learning strategies is 0.766, which means if language learning strategies increase by 1 point, the thinking style increases by as many as 0.766 points.

Discussion

This research covers the impact of style of thinking on strategies in English language learning on eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Lapandewa. From the data analyzed in the finding above, the result shows that the students have a good thinking style in learning English. It can be a trigger for students to achieve good English achievement as found by Mohsin *et al.* (2021) in the conclusion of their research that thinking style is greatly associated with students' participation in the classroom, which at the same time it increases academic achievement. In addition, research from Muslim *et al.* (2022) concludes that language learning strategies and thinking style have a positive significant relationship. It can be inferred that good language learning strategies produce a good thinking style.

This research proposes a problem statement which is whether there is a positive relationship between students' language learning strategies and thinking style in learning English. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) of this research is there is not any positive relationship between students' language learning strategies and thinking styles in learning English. While the alternative hypothesis (H_a) of this research is there is a positive relationship between students' language learning strategies and thinking styles in learning English. Based on the result of the correlation testing using Pearson Correlation Product Moment, it is found that the score of the correlation (R_{count}) between language learning strategy and thinking style is 0.775 with a probability score is 0.05. It means there is a language learning strategy that is positively and strongly correlated to the thinking style.

The result above is in line with some other researchers, such as Nasukhah (2020) who finds that the language learning strategies significantly correlate to the thinking style of grade eleven students at MA Almaarif Singosari. Moreover, Alireza & Mansoure (2016) who observe three parts of thinking style, those are legislative, executive, and judicial thinking style and their correlation to learning strategies find that the legislative thinking style is positively correlated to the methods of learning that involve motivation and attitude. Negahi *et al.* (2015) add that as a result of not knowing their strengths and weaknesses, students who do not pay attention to the proper way of learning quickly lose the desire for thinking, learning, and achievement. Therefore, by understanding and applying proper strategies in learning English, the students will have a good thinking style that will affect positively their English learning achievement.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

According to this study, the language learning strategy positively contributes to the thinking style. On average, students with good language learning strategies have also a good thinking style. Those variables correlate with each other and give a positive and strong contribution. It means the greater the level of the strategy in language learning the students use, the better their thinking style they have. Students with a good language learning strategy will have a better thinking style. Meanwhile, students with poor learning strategies will get a low thinking style.

Since the learning strategy correlates positively and strongly with the thinking style, the English teacher should improve the learning strategy and the thinking style more. It must give a positive contribution to English learning and their English learning achievement.

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