

Investigating Language Learning Strategies Used by Year 6 Malaysian Urban Primary School Students

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Abstract

Language learning encompasses a variety of strategies tailored to individual preferences, reflecting cognitive styles, learning preferences, and cultural backgrounds. Understanding these preferences helps to illuminate how learners engage with tasks, interpret language input, and pursue proficiency. This study aims to identify the most and least commonly used language learning strategies employed by Malaysian primary school students in learning English as a second language. The study involved 30 Year 6 students, with an equal number of male and female participants, conducted during the 2024/2025 academic year at a primary school in an urban area of Johor. Using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 7.0 by Oxford, researchers quantitatively measured students' use of English learning strategies. The results revealed that Social Strategies were the most frequently used, while Compensation Strategies were the least utilized. Exploring various language learning strategies enables educators and learners to select the most effective approaches for achieving optimal outcomes in language acquisition.

Keywords: Language Learning Strategies, English as a Second Language (ESL), Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), Education, Primary School.

Introduction

In our contemporary era, the pervasive influence of digitalization has seamlessly interconnected global citizens. This interconnectedness underscores the growing necessity for individuals worldwide to master the English language, recognized as the lingua franca of international communication. This urgency is particularly pronounced for English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. According to Jirin et al (2023), Malaysia maintains diplomatic ties and business engagements with countries worldwide that utilize English as their primary language for international communication, commerce, education, and various other significant roles. Consequently, in its endeavor to cultivate

Malaysian individuals capable of competing on a global scale, the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025) places significant emphasis on enhancing the language skills of ESL learners. This context underscores the relevance and importance of investigating the language learning strategies employed by Year 6 Malaysian urban primary school students, as it directly aligns with Malaysia's broader educational objectives aimed at equipping students with the necessary language proficiency to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and competitive global landscape.

However, the process of language learning is multifaceted, encompassing a wide array of strategies tailored to individual preferences and characteristics, such as cognitive styles, learning preferences, and cultural backgrounds. These strategies significantly impact how learners engage with language tasks, interpret language input, and ultimately attain proficiency in the target language. In second language learning, individuals exhibit varying levels of success, with some mastering a new language effortlessly while others face challenges despite similar exposure to linguistic input (Aziz & Kashinata, 2021). This discrepancy in proficiency levels poses a fundamental challenge for researchers in the field, who aim not only to explore the significance of second language acquisition but also to identify and elucidate the most effective and least effective strategies in language learning. These strategies can be categorized in various ways. However, despite this categorization, it is important to acknowledge the interconnectedness of these categories within a dynamic learning process. Isolating the impact of any one category in determining language acquisition outcomes is inherently complex and often inconclusive (Abdullaev, 2021). Thus, understanding these learning preferences is crucial for educators to effectively facilitate language acquisition.

Building upon this understanding, this research aims to address the following questions:

1. Which language learning strategy is most commonly used by Year 6 ESL urban primary pupils in learning English?
2. Which language learning strategy is least commonly used by Year 6 ESL urban primary pupils in learning English?

Literature Review

Language Learning Strategies

A language learning strategy refers to any approach, technique, or method employed by a learner to enhance their language acquisition process. These strategies can involve various activities such as memorization, practice, interaction, and exposure to the target language. They can be specific to certain skills like listening, speaking, reading, or writing, and can vary depending on individual preferences, learning styles, and the characteristics of the language being learned. According to Oxford (1990), "Language learning strategies are conscious or unconscious thoughts and actions taken by language learners to enhance the learning and use of a second or foreign language. These strategies can involve a wide range of activities, such as rehearsal, memorization, note-taking, inferencing, self-monitoring, and seeking opportunities for language use and practice."

Language Learning Strategies (LLS) encompass a broad spectrum of methods and approaches that learners employ to facilitate the acquisition of a new language. These strategies can be classified into distinct categories based on their intended purpose, function, and the cognitive processes they engage. As highlighted by Oxford (1990), language learning strategies encompass both conscious and unconscious thoughts and actions employed by

language learners to enhance their acquisition and utilization of a second or foreign language. Wenden (1998); Cohen & Apeh (1980) established a comprehensive framework for categorizing language learning strategies into five main categories: metacognitive, cognitive, social, affective, and memory strategies. Additionally, based on her research on LLS among adult learners, Oxford (1990) developed a widely accepted classification of LLS taxonomy, consisting of six categories: memory strategies, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Oxford (1990) introduced a widely accepted classification system for language learning strategies (LLS), delineating six distinct categories that encompass various aspects of the language acquisition process. This taxonomy serves as a comprehensive framework for understanding the diverse range of strategies learners employ to enhance their proficiency in a new language.

Memory strategies constitute the first category, encompassing techniques used by learners to store, retain, and recall language information more effectively. Mnemonic devices, repetition, and visualisation are among the strategies employed to bolster memory retention in language learning contexts (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Cognitive strategies, the second category, involve the mental processes used by learners to understand, process, and manipulate language input. Learners utilise these strategies to decode language structures, solve comprehension problems, and facilitate language production through techniques such as analysis, prediction, and inference. Compensation strategies, the third category, come into play when learners encounter limitations in their language proficiency. In such instances, learners deploy alternative means, such as gestures, paraphrasing, or circumlocution, to convey meaning and overcome communication barriers effectively (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

Metacognitive strategies, the fourth category, revolve around learners' ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their language learning process. These strategies enable learners to set goals, assess progress, and regulate their learning through activities like goal-setting, self-assessment, and reflective practices. Affective strategies, the fifth category, focus on managing learners' emotions, attitudes, and motivation toward language learning. Techniques such as positive self-talk, relaxation exercises, and seeking enjoyable language learning activities help learners maintain motivation and mitigate anxiety throughout the learning journey. Finally, social strategies, the sixth category, involve learners' interaction with others for language learning purposes. Learners utilise these strategies to engage in communication, collaboration, and feedback exchange with native speakers or peers, fostering opportunities for language practice and cultural exchange.

Oxford's taxonomy provides a comprehensive framework that elucidates the multifaceted nature of language learning strategies, offering valuable insights into the diverse approaches employed by learners to enhance their language proficiency and effectiveness in acquiring a new language. These diverse categories of language learning strategies provide learners with a comprehensive toolkit to navigate the complexities of language acquisition, catering to individual preferences, learning styles, and needs. By understanding and implementing various strategies from these categories, learners can enhance their language proficiency and foster more effective language learning experiences.

Oxford categorized this taxonomy into two main types; direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies involve learners' actions directly engaging with the language being learned, focusing on comprehension, production, or acquisition of linguistic elements. Examples include repetition, interaction with native speakers, use of dictionaries or grammar books,

and formal language learning techniques like drills or exercises. In essence, direct strategies encompass memorization, cognitive, and compensation strategies.

On the contrary, indirect strategies entail actions by learners that don't involve direct language interaction but contribute to the overall language learning process. These strategies focus on managing the learning environment, regulating emotions, and enhancing motivation. Examples include setting language learning goals, self-assessment, seeking language learning opportunities in daily life, managing anxiety, and maintaining positive attitudes towards language learning. Indirect strategies encompass compensation, affective, and social strategies (Cohen, 2011)

By understanding and employing both direct and indirect strategies, learners can cultivate a comprehensive approach to language acquisition. This enables them to tackle linguistic challenges, create a conducive learning environment, and sustain motivation throughout their language learning journey.

Successful Language Learners

What makes a language learner successful? This question has long intrigued researchers and educators alike, prompting investigations into the characteristics and behaviors of effective language learners. As Thornbury (2002) suggests, being a proficient language learner entails more than just natural talent; it involves a combination of motivation, perseverance, and strategic use of learning techniques. Indeed, successful language learners exhibit a variety of attributes and practices that contribute to their mastery and fluency in a target language.

Oxford and Shi (2017) define learning strategies as the habitual actions taken by language learners to enhance the absorption, retention, retrieval, and application of new information. Oxford (1990) further observes that these strategies can improve their ease of use, speed, enjoyment, effectiveness, self-direction, and applicability to different contexts. Consequently, employing effective learning strategies can enable language learners to acquire English more efficiently. The production of successful language learners only occurs when the fundamentals of effective learning methods are incorporated into teaching and learning sessions. Educators must recognize that each student learns uniquely. Understanding the qualities and strategies of proficient learners can offer valuable insights for both educators and learners aiming to enhance their language learning experiences. To achieve meaningful personalized learning, strategy becomes a crucial element of instructional design and implementation (Din, 2015; Din, 2020).

Before commencing a lesson, teachers need to articulate the lesson's objectives. This provides a focal point for students, enabling them to reflect and concentrate during the lesson. According to Gagne (2020), learning outcome goals encompass intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, verbal information, motor skills, and attitude values. By delineating these outcomes, students gain clarity on their learning priorities, facilitating proficiency in the target language. To achieve optimal learning outcomes, teachers must also take into account various factors, including the learning characteristics of students, the learning environment, characteristics of study materials, and instrumental factors.

Malvic (2020) states that there are many different types of learning styles and preferences, and not everyone fits neatly into one group. Generally, the most common types of learners are visual, auditory, kinesthetic, reading and writing learners. Conducting a survey can help teachers understand their students better. The survey includes questions designed specifically to identify each student's preferred Language Learning Style (LLS).

A study conducted by Urai Salam and Sukarti (2020) shows that the student practiced by repeating activities in a natural way and by sending and receiving messages, which let her figure out a method to discover the precise information in English problems. At most, she employed social and cognitive methods. try to acquire English in several methods. Cohen (1998) stated that learners are aware of their use of language learning strategy with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and gaining a better understanding of the target language. It is never impossible to nurture a successful language student. It only needs technique and time to accomplish the objective. This study aims to explore the key traits and approaches associated with proficient language learners, drawing upon existing research and empirical evidence to shed light on the factors that contribute to their success.

Components in ESL Classrooms

English is a globally recognized language with significant importance across various countries and industries, making it highly sought after worldwide. Proficiency in English can greatly enhance an individual's job prospects, especially in regions where English serves as a second language. Malaysia, a developing nation with Malay as its official language and English as its second language, underscores the importance of both languages in its education system, as highlighted in Shift 2 of the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025). Mastery of essential components such as reading, writing, listening, speaking, and grammar is crucial in language acquisition, whether for a first or second language. Proficiency and fluency in the targeted language are significantly influenced by the mastery of these components.

Firstly, writing plays a crucial role in enabling learners to accomplish various tasks in any given situation. It serves as a tool for individuals to articulate their ideas, express concerns, and convey emotions (Veramuthu and Shah, 2020). Mastering writing is particularly beneficial for ESL learners, as it enhances their ability to excel in academic, professional, and social settings. However, writing is a multifaceted skill that requires proficiency in other aspects as well. A study conducted by Wil et al (2019) highlighted the close relationship between writing proficiency and mastery of grammar and vocabulary knowledge.

Next, reading holds immense importance for ESL learners, as it is essential for facilitating a comprehensive language learning experience. Without the ability to comprehend written content, learners cannot fully engage with or appreciate it (Edward et al., 2021). According to Klimova and Zambrova (2020), reading is significant as it enables individuals to thrive and stay informed. Moreover, reading opens up opportunities for ESL learners by facilitating the acquisition of new words, skills, and experiences.

Mastering listening is essential for fostering effective and meaningful communication, ultimately contributing to success in personal life, education, and career pursuits. Efficient listening skills play a crucial role in averting conflicts and addressing problems proactively. Given the inherent challenges of learning a second language, prioritizing mastery of listening skills is strongly advisable to mitigate potential inconveniences. Ho et al (2023) emphasized in their study that successful language learners exhibit essential traits, including consistently selecting appropriate second language learning techniques tailored to their situations and communicative goals. Furthermore, they actively evaluate the efficacy of these techniques throughout the learning process.

The next crucial component for learners to master is speaking. According to Kashinathan and Aziz (2021), speaking holds equal importance to other language skills and requires refinement to enhance communication among learners of the target language. Particularly in educational settings, speaking plays a prominent role, enabling teachers to

deliver effective instruction and foster interactive learning environments in classrooms. These benefits extend to ESL classrooms as well. While speaking may pose challenges for ESL learners, employing appropriate techniques and strategies can lead to successful mastery.

Lastly, grammar stands out as one of the fundamental components of language learning. It not only bolsters confidence and credibility but also ensures clear communication among speakers. As noted by Segaran and Hashim (2022), a solid grasp of grammar is indispensable for conveying opinions succinctly and clearly. Proficiency in grammar undoubtedly aids ESL learners in enhancing their language accuracy and fluency.

Methodology

Research Design

This paper delves into the preferred language learning strategies employed by urban primary school students in Malaysia. Employing a quantitative approach, the study utilized a survey method, gathering information through a single questionnaire tool. The structured nature of the quantitative technique ensures the researchers can consistently apply it in the field.

Respondents

Purposive sampling was employed to select respondents for this study. Deliberate sampling, as described by Patton (2002), as cited in Merriam, (2009), aims to gather instances that provide rich and detailed information. Therefore, thirty proficient Year 6 pupils from an urban school were chosen to participate in the study. These pupils were provided with questionnaires as part of the survey process. Before completing the questionnaire, the students received a comprehensive explanation of its contents.

Data Collection Method and Analysis

The study employed a modified version of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) questionnaire, originally developed by Rebecca Oxford in the 1980s. This widely used instrument helps researchers understand the strategies language learners use to acquire a new language. In this study, the SILL data were analyzed by computing the mean score for each skill, providing insights into the frequency and types of strategies employed by the participants.

Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of fifty-nine questions. According to Merriam (2009), this format allows researchers to promptly recognize scenarios, comprehend respondents' perspectives, and gain new insights into the subject. The fifty-nine items on the questionnaire were divided into six sections:

Table 1

Distribution of Questions Across Different Sections

Parts	Question Number
Part A	1-9
Part B	10-23
Part C	24-29
Part D	30-38
Part E	39-45
Part F	46-51

The survey questionnaire comprised statements, with participants instructed to select responses ranging from "Never True" to "Always True," depending on their agreement with the statements. Results were aggregated and expressed as percentages. Each category was scrutinized using a specific approach to identify potential topics relevant to the study objectives. The 59 items pertained to students' techniques in learning English as a second language. To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument in this research, two knowledgeable teachers from the Muar area reviewed and confirmed it using a peer-checking technique.

Data Collection Procedure

As part of this study, questionnaires regarding the use of Language Learning Strategies in an urban Johor school were distributed. Thirty Year 6 students participated by completing the questionnaires. Data collection was conducted using the purposive sampling technique. Respondents were assured that their privacy would be protected, and any personal information provided would be used solely for research purposes. The gathered data was evaluated using Microsoft Excel to identify the most and least significant student strategies.

Findings

This subsection presents the findings obtained from administering questionnaires to 30 Year 6 students at a primary school in Johor. The questionnaires are categorized into six sections: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social. Each category comprises 9, 14, 6, 9, 6, and 6 items, respectively. The findings are depicted using bar charts based on the mean scores of the students' responses. Part A of the questionnaire pertains to Memory Strategy, Part B to Cognitive Strategy, Part C to Compensation Strategy, Part D to Metacognitive Strategy, Part E to Affective Strategy, and Part F to Social Strategy.

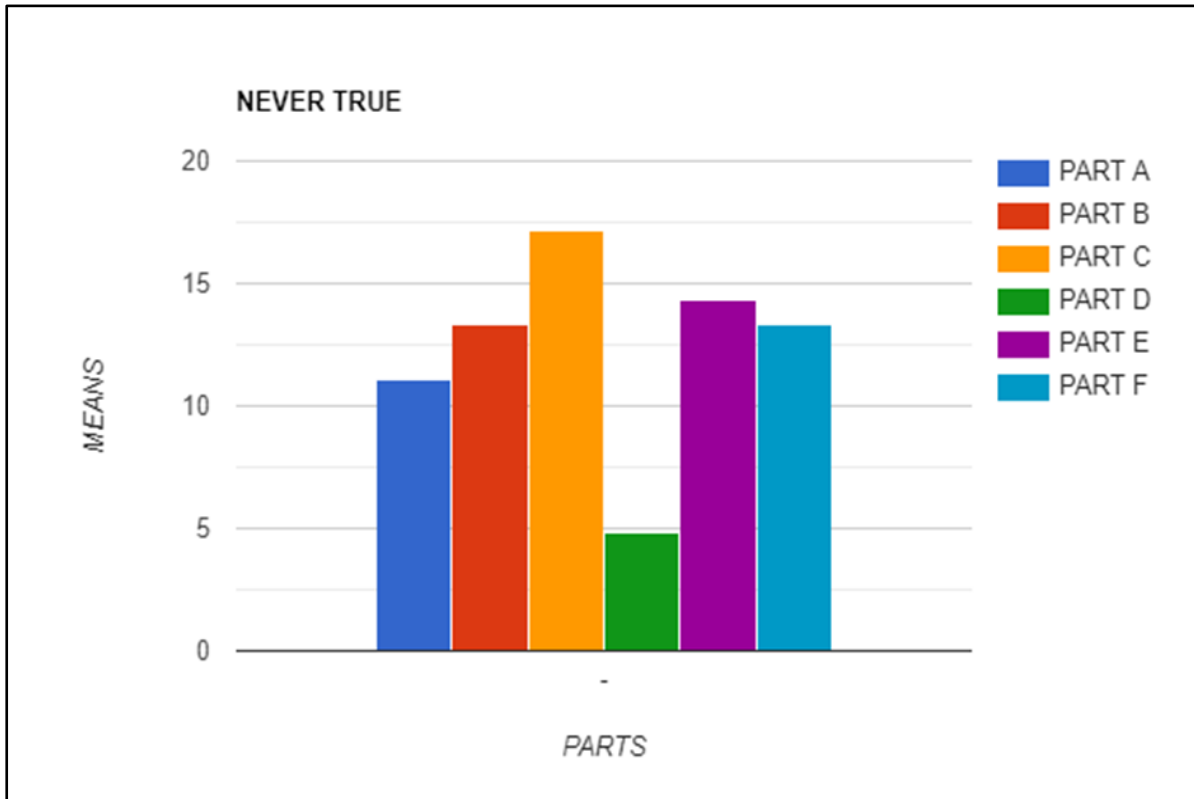


Figure 1: Mean Scores of Students' Responses for "Never True"

Figure 1 illustrates the mean scores of students' responses to "Never True". The highest percentage of students' responses for "Never True" is observed in Compensation Strategy at 17.2%. This is closely followed by Affective Strategy in the second position with a percentage of 14.3%. Conversely, the lowest percentage of students' responses for "Never True" is recorded in the Metacognitive Strategy.

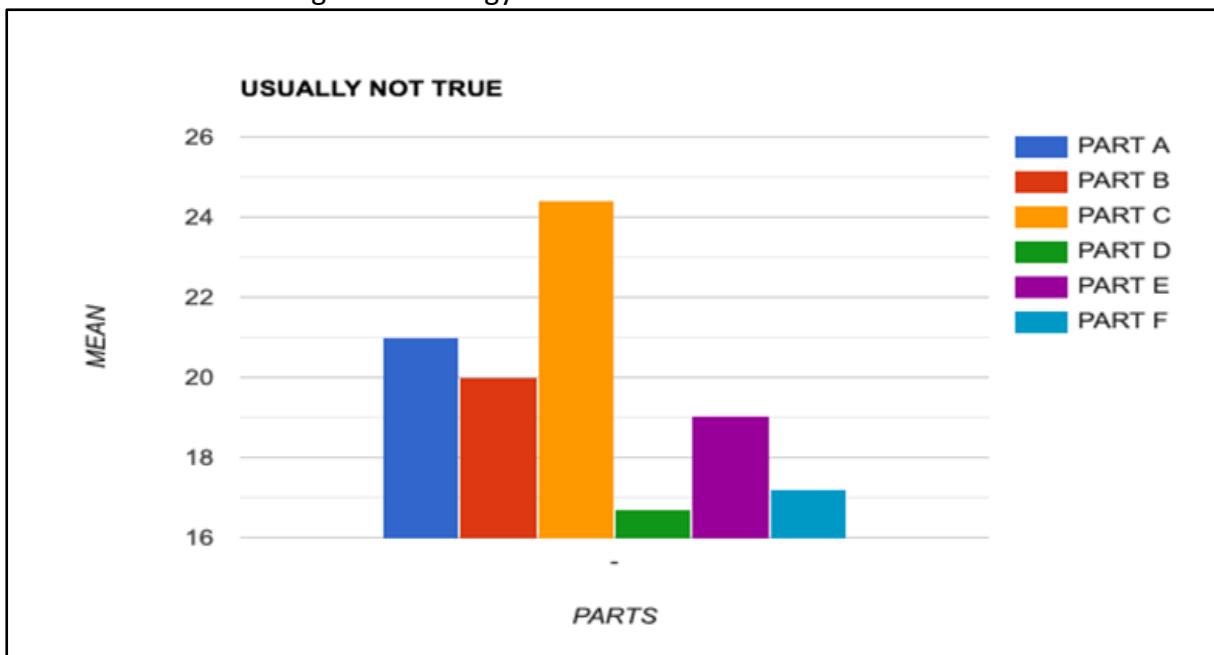


Figure 2: Mean Scores of Students' Responses for "Usually Not True"

Figure 2 illustrates the mean scores of students' responses for "Usually Not True". The highest percentage of students' responses for this Likert scale point is recorded in the Compensation Strategy at 24.4%. Following closely, the second highest responses from students are recorded in Memory Strategy, while 20.2% of students' responses are recorded in Cognitive Strategy.

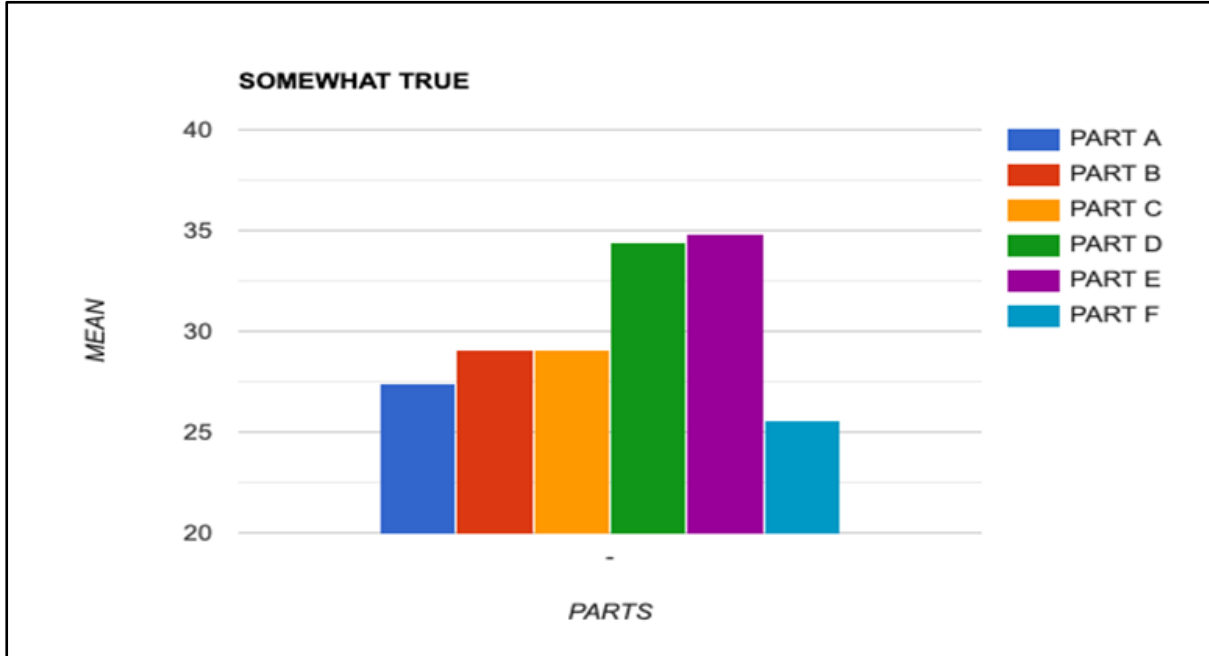


Figure 3: Mean Scores of Students' Responses for "Somewhat True"

Figure 3 illustrates the mean scores of students' responses to "Somewhat True". The highest responses from students are gathered from Affective Strategy items. Cognitive Strategy and Compensation Strategy share the same position for recorded responses from the students, accumulating 29.1%. Lastly, 25.6% of students responded to items in Social Strategy for the "Somewhat True" Likert scale point.

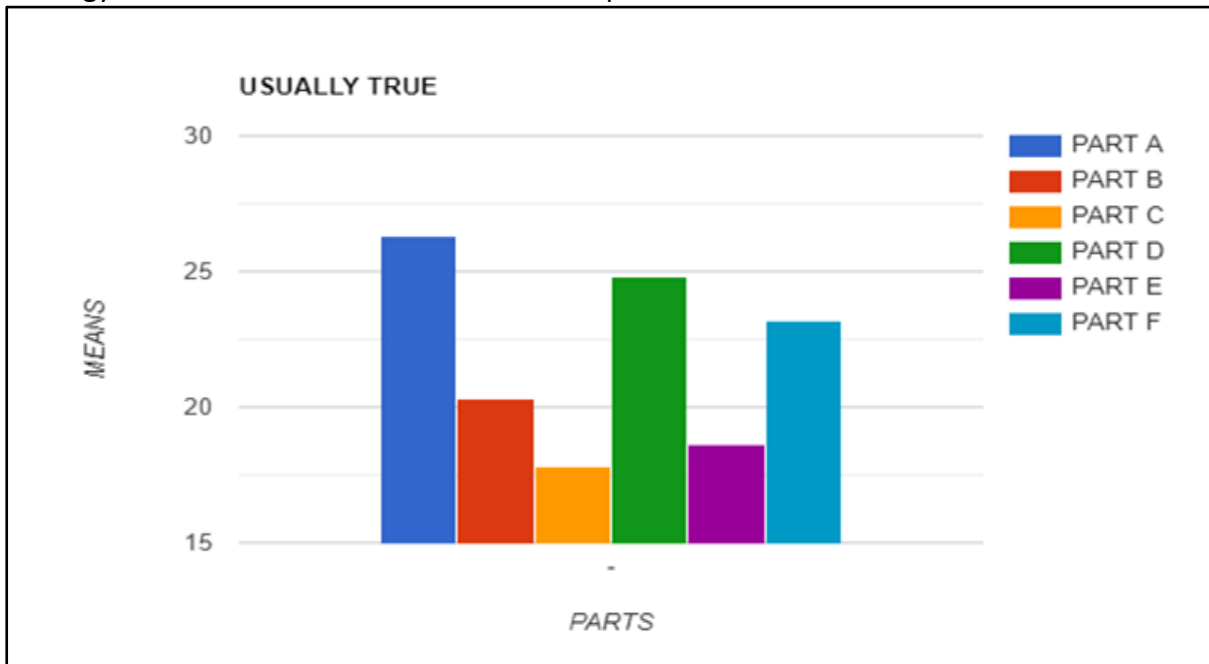


Figure 4: Mean Scores of Students' Responses for "Usually True"

Figure 4 illustrates the mean scores of students' responses for "Usually True". The highest responses from students are collected from Memory Strategy, accumulating at 26.3%. Next, 24.8% of students selected "Usually True" for Metacognitive Strategy. Finally, Social Strategy takes the third place for the responses gathered from students.

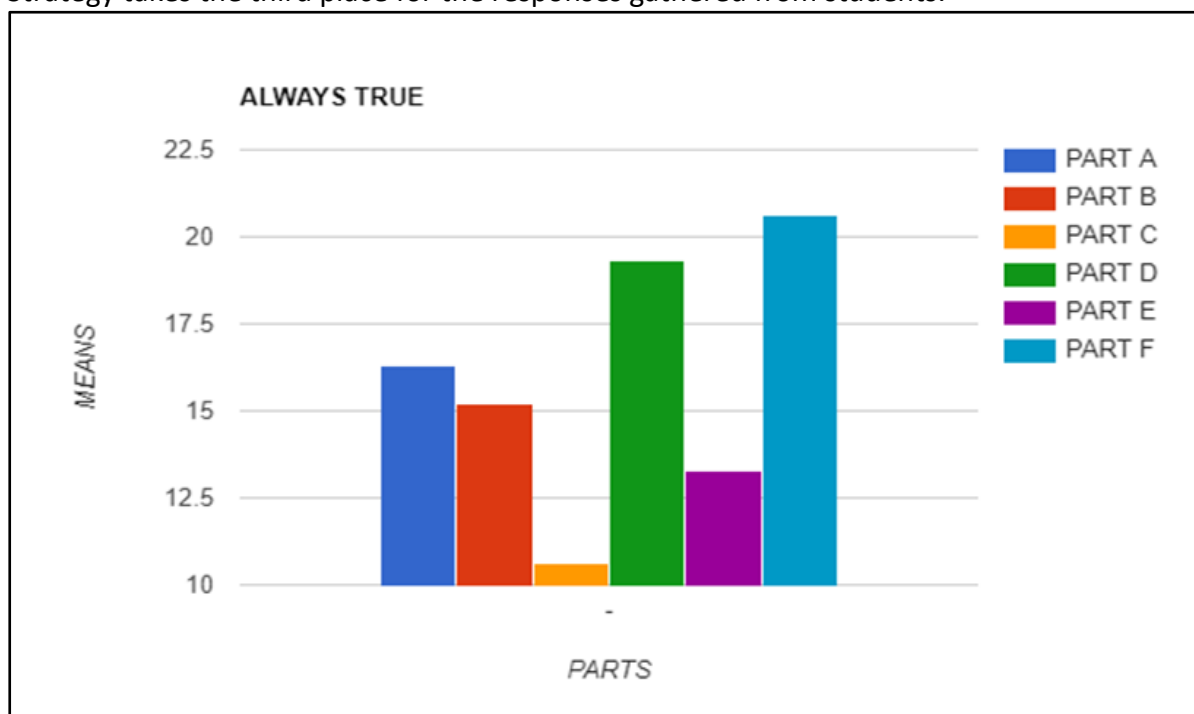


Figure 5: Mean Scores of Students' Responses for "Always True"

Figure 5 displays the mean scores of students' responses to "Always True". The highest percentage of students' responses for "Always True" is recorded in Social Strategy at 20.6%. It is closely followed by Metacognitive Strategy in the second place with a percentage of 19.3%. The lowest percentage of students' responses is recorded in the Compensation Strategy.

Based on the findings discussed above, it can be concluded that among the six learning strategies, namely Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social, the most used strategy by Year 6 students in this study is Social Strategy. At the same time, Compensation Strategy has become the least used strategy by Year 6 students at this school.

Discussion

Research Question 1:

The most used language learning strategy by Year 6 Malaysian urban primary school students.

Social strategy involves learners' interaction with others for language learning purposes. It encompasses a range of activities that facilitate communication, collaboration, and feedback exchange with native speakers or peers. By engaging in these strategies, students create opportunities for language practice and cultural exchange, thereby enhancing their proficiency and understanding of the English language. Common social strategies employed by students include actively learning about the culture of English speakers, asking questions and seeking help from English speakers, practicing English with friends, and requesting native speakers to correct their language usage. These actions demonstrate students' attentiveness when someone speaks English, particularly when they recognize superior English-speaking

abilities in others. In such instances, they actively seek assistance to deepen their understanding of the subject matter (Lestari and Wahyudin, 2020).

Additionally, the findings revealed that students employ strategies such as asking English speakers to slow down when encountering difficulties in understanding, demonstrating their proactive approach to language acquisition through social interaction. Anggarista and Wahyudin (2022) suggest that this strategy is best utilized to enhance students' listening skills through practice in both academic and everyday conversations with peers. Hence, social strategies foster language acquisition and promote cultural understanding and effective communication skills among Year 6 ESL learners in urban areas.

Research Question 2

The least used language learning strategy by Year 6 Malaysian urban primary school students.

Among the language learning strategies employed by Year 6 ESL urban primary pupils in learning English, the compensation strategy appears to be the least utilized. This strategy involves various techniques, such as making guesses to understand unfamiliar English words, resorting to gestures when unable to recall a word during a conversation, creating new words if the correct ones are unknown, reading English without constantly referring to a dictionary for new words, attempting to predict the next utterance in English, and substituting an English word with a synonymous word or phrase when unable to recall it.

Despite its potential to aid comprehension and communication, the compensation strategy seems to be underutilized by these students compared to other strategies. Students who do not employ the compensation strategy may exhibit a more cautious or conservative approach to language learning. They may prefer to rely on traditional methods of vocabulary acquisition and grammar study, rather than taking risks or experimenting with language use. These students may feel less comfortable inferring meaning from context or using non-verbal cues to aid comprehension. Additionally, they may be less inclined to creatively adapt language when faced with challenges, preferring instead to adhere strictly to established language rules. Overall, students who do not utilize the compensation strategy may be less inclined to explore alternative methods of communication and may rely more heavily on conventional language learning techniques.

Strategies

Strategies for Improving Writing

Both students and teachers can play vital roles in leveraging social strategies to enhance writing skills through a variety of activities, whether inside or outside the classroom. Students especially can utilise social strategies to enhance writing skills by employing **peer review groups**. Under the guidance of the teacher, students can establish peer review groups, allowing them to exchange drafts of their writing assignments and offer constructive feedback to one another as they practise and refine their writing skills. Teachers can facilitate these groups by providing guidelines for feedback and overseeing the process to ensure a supportive and constructive environment. Next, by employing social strategy, teachers can assign **collaborative writing projects** where students work together to create a piece of writing based on the theme given, such as a group essay, story, or research report. Collaborative writing encourages students to brainstorm ideas, collaborate on content development, and edit each other's work, fostering teamwork and improving writing skills through collective effort.

Other than that, teachers can significantly contribute a major role by organising writing workshops or peer editing sessions where students present their writing to their classmates for feedback and revision. These workshops provide students with an opportunity to receive multiple perspectives on their writing and learn from each other's strengths and areas for improvement. Last but not least, teachers can also incorporate **social media platforms** into writing assignments by asking students to write posts, blogs, or tweets on relevant topics. Students can engage with each other's posts, provide feedback, and interact with a wider audience, enhancing their writing skills while leveraging the power of social media for communication and expression.

Overall, by embracing social strategies such as peer collaboration, feedback exchange, and online interaction, both students and teachers can create a dynamic learning environment that fosters creativity, collaboration, and continuous improvement in writing skills.

Strategies for Improving Reading

Students who are inclined to use social strategies often enjoy collaborating with others during lessons. In reading, certain strategies based on social interaction can be employed to enhance students' reading skills. Teachers can implement these strategies in their ESL classrooms to improve students' reading abilities.

Firstly, teachers can encourage cooperative learning during reading lessons, for example, through pair work activities. Teachers can distribute a variety of short reading texts to all pairs, with the task of identifying 10 unfamiliar words collectively. Each student is assigned 5 words to define in English. After completing the task, students check each other's answers in pairs. This activity promotes a sense of responsibility and language accuracy among students.

Next, teachers can design lessons that allow students to explore English cultures and English speakers through group activities. This can be done in groups of 3 or 4 students, where each group receives brochures about different countries. Each student is assigned a specific heading such as "History of the Country," "Interesting Places to Visit," "Delicious Food to Try," and "Unique Cultures." The number of headings should match the number of students in the group. Students read the brochures together and transfer relevant information to their worksheets. After completing the task, they can take turns sharing their findings. This activity increases students' interest in learning and boosts their self-esteem. These strategies are beneficial for reading lessons as they promote interactive reading activities among students.

Strategies for Improving Listening and Speaking

For students who favour social strategies in language learning, integrating interactive and collaborative methods into lesson planning is essential. In speaking and listening activities, teachers can introduce **role-playing and simulations**. Activities could involve students acting out real-life scenarios like ordering food at a restaurant, negotiating a business deal, or conducting interviews. For primary school students, utilize simple and concise questioning and answering structures such as "Do you/Can you/Have you...?" or "What is your...?" followed by responses like 'Yes, I do/can/have...' or 'No, I don't/can't/haven't...' or 'I like...' (followed by a single-word answer). This approach encourages students to participate in meaningful conversations, practise functional language, enhance fluency, gain confidence, and develop communication skills in context.

Teachers can introduce '**Conversation Circles**' by organising small groups of students to engage in focused discussions on specific language topics or themes. They can provide discussion prompts, role-playing scenarios, or debate topics to stimulate conversation and encourage interaction among participants. This activity can serve as the main classroom activity for the day, with students presenting or sharing their ideas afterward. Additionally, it can be utilised as a set induction or closure, where pupils brainstorm ideas or summarise the topic. Conversation circles help increase students' engagement and motivation throughout the lesson by providing ample input for active participation.

In the primary ESL classroom, **using technology for speaking and listening** activities can boost engagement, offer genuine language practice, and support communication skills development. Hashim (2022) notes that technology in ESL classrooms not only motivates students but also ensures authentic learning experiences. ESL teachers can employ creative teaching methods with technology to make lessons exciting and keep students motivated, which is crucial for success in learning a second language. Motivation plays a key role in driving and sustaining learning behaviours. Technology, especially through videos combining audio and visual elements, enriches course content and motivates learners. Educational researchers suggest that online platforms can replicate real-life activities, making learning more captivating and realistic.

For instance, immersive virtual reality (VR) experiences allow students to immerse themselves in simulated real-world situations, where they must communicate in English and navigate various scenarios. VR simulations can transport students to environments like airports, restaurants, or job interviews, offering interactive speaking and listening practice within context. Additionally, creating online speaking and listening tasks on platforms like Liveworksheet, Kahoot!, and Quizzes provides students with different perspectives and motivations. Some students may feel too self-conscious to speak English in front of their peers and teachers. However, completing speaking tasks online could offer them more freedom and comfort, as they feel less pressure from being observed. By integrating these technology-enhanced speaking and listening activities into the primary ESL classroom, teachers can create dynamic and interactive learning experiences tailored to students' diverse needs. This approach promotes language fluency and proficiency while fostering a global perspective on language learning and communication.

Strategies for Grammar Improvement

Based on the data analysis, students favor social strategies in language learning. Conducting a chatterbox activity is an effective strategy to improve grammar. In this activity, students are grouped into teams of 4 to 6. They are given a board filled with blank sentences and take turns rolling a dice. They need to fill in the blanks with the correct grammar, such as verbs, nouns, and adjectives. In each round, students can only ask their teammates for help twice. This activity requires high social skills to complete the task successfully. Shahidah and Parilah (2020) stated that language-use strategies include retrieval strategies, rehearsal strategies, "cover" strategies, and communication strategies. This chatterbox activity incorporates these elements, particularly emphasizing social interaction and teamwork to enhance grammar skills.

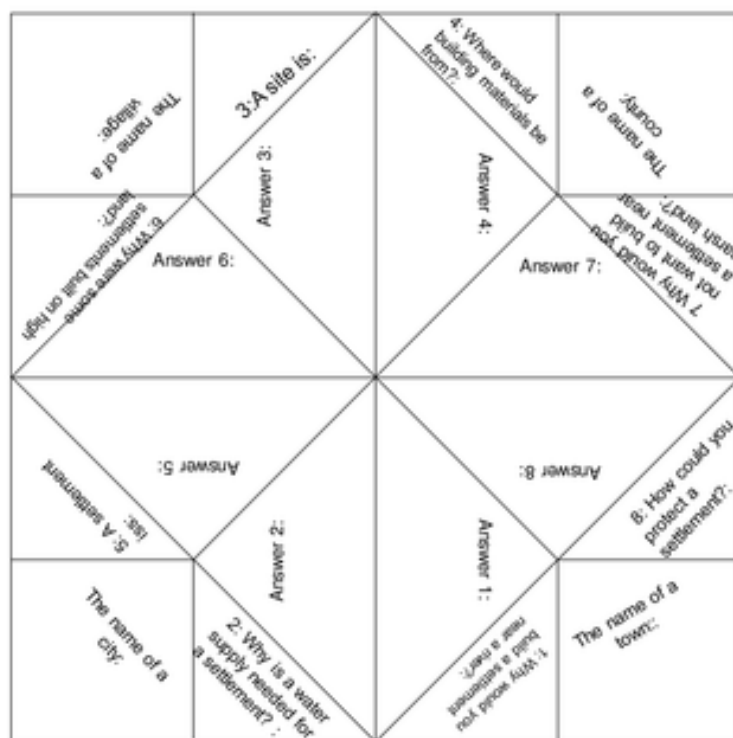


Figure 7: Example of chatterbox template

Teachers can enhance grammar lessons by using templates from online tools such as Canva and Cleverpatch to create engaging and relevant themes for their students. The topics chosen should be pertinent to the students' grammar understanding. Peer discussion during these exercises can significantly improve students' learning, as they often learn better through interaction with one another.

Materials such as a chatterbox board, dice, and beads should be prepared by the teachers. This approach not only improves grammar understanding but also helps create a positive learning environment for pupils. The chatterbox activity, in particular, is suitable for grammar lessons as it encourages students to engage in interactive grammatical tasks, fostering both social interaction and collaborative learning.

Implications and Conclusion

Understanding students' language learning strategies holds profound implications for various parties involved in the language learning process including students themselves, educators, and broader stakeholders like parents, educational institutions, and policymakers. As for students, understanding their preferences in learning strategy provides :

a) *Self-awareness and Empowerment*: Recognizing and understanding their language learning strategies can empower students to take ownership of their learning process. It allows them to identify what works best for them and tailor their approach accordingly.

b) *Efficiency and Effectiveness*: Knowing their preferred strategies enables students to focus on methods that are most efficient and effective for them, leading to faster progress and improved language proficiency.

c) *Strategic Adjustment*: Students can learn to adapt their strategies based on their language learning goals, the specific skills they need to develop, and the challenges they encounter. This flexibility enhances their ability to overcome obstacles and make continuous progress.

Meanwhile, as for educators, knowing students' preferred language learning strategies helps them to plan for :

a) *Differentiated Instruction*: Understanding students' language learning strategies enable teachers to provide personalised instruction that meets the diverse needs and preferences of learners. They can incorporate a variety of teaching methods and activities that align with students' preferred strategies.

b) *Targeted Support and Feedback*: Teachers can offer targeted support and feedback to help students refine their language learning strategies and overcome any obstacles they may encounter. This may involve guiding students to experiment with new approaches or providing additional resources and practice opportunities.

c) *Monitoring Progress*: By observing students' use of language learning strategies, teachers can gauge their progress and identify areas for improvement. This information informs instructional planning and allows teachers to track students' development over time.

Last but not least, it is also important for the stakeholders such as parents, educational institutions, and policymakers to understand students' learning preferences to help them to work on :

a) *Resource Allocation*: Stakeholders can allocate resources, such as funding, materials, and professional development opportunities, to support the implementation of effective language learning strategies. This investment enhances the quality of language education programs and improves student outcomes.

b) *Program Evaluation*: Assessing students' language learning strategies can serve as a valuable component of program evaluation efforts. By examining the relationship between strategy use and language proficiency outcomes, stakeholders can identify areas of strength and areas that may require improvement within language education initiatives.

c) *Policy Development*: Insights gained from understanding students' language learning strategies can inform the development of policies and guidelines related to language education. This includes curriculum development, teacher training standards, and assessment practices aimed at promoting the use of effective strategies and maximising learning outcomes.

In conclusion, identifying students' language learning strategies is paramount for tailoring instruction, nurturing student engagement and autonomy, and maximising the effectiveness of language education programs. This understanding not only benefits students, teachers, and stakeholders by enriching learning experiences and outcomes in language learning contexts but also opens up a plethora of opportunities for customising instruction, tailoring learning experiences, and optimising programs. Delving into the implications of recognizing these strategies reveals how they empower students to take charge of their learning journey, enable educators to provide targeted assistance, and guide stakeholders in resource allocation and policy development. This exploration sheds light on the intricate dynamics inherent in effective language education, underscoring the critical importance of strategic alignment among learners, educators, and the broader educational framework.

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