INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Vol 12, Issue 11, (2022) E-ISSN: 2222-6990

A Systematic Review of Language Learning Strategies Used by ESL Pupils with Different English Proficiency Levels (2013-2022)

Fatin Nur Syafawani and Harwati Hashim

Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi 43600, Selangor, Malaysia

Email: P111773@siswa.ukm.edu.my, harwati@ukm.edu.my

Corresponding Author's Email: harwati@ukm.edu.my

To Link this Article: http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i11/15698 DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i11/15698

Published Date: 13 November 2022

Abstract

Language Learning Strategies (LLS) is widely known to be able to help teachers and learners to achieve learning goals and to make possible the process of language learning. However, among the six categories of LLS as listed by Oxford (1990), different pupils will have different preferences of LLS to be practiced. Thus, this review will systematically determine the preferences of LLS by pupils with different English proficiency levels. Using 4 databases, namely Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, Educational Resources Information centre (ERIC) and Google Scholar. With several exclusion and inclusion criteria taken into consideration, 15 out of 233 articles from 2013 to 2022 were extracted and reviewed. First, the significant findings shows that pupils in different levels of education prefer metacognitive strategies the most and affective and memory strategies the least in learning English. Second, there was no significant relationship between the preferences of LLS between pupils in different proficiency levels. However, based on the findings there are still gaps in the ages of the participants in research about LLS. Generally, this review is useful for educators to know the suitable strategies to be utilized in their language classroom and in identifying the gaps for research in LLS and different English proficiency levels, to create a better English learning environment in the future.

Keywords: LLS, Preferences, Proficiency Levels, Strategies

Introduction

The importance of learning English especially as a second language and global communication language has increased globally along with world development. Today, the world has become a borderless nation thus English is used as a universal communication tool. According to Lessard (1997) a big shift had happened over the last few decades where emphasis in education was given to learners and learning, instead of teachers and teaching. Due to this emphasis which was drifted to the learners and their learning process, the

existence of various language learning strategies (LLS) had become an important aspect in language acquisition.

Learning strategies, in specific language learning strategies have become one of contributing factors in English as Second Language (ESL) or English as Foreign Language (EFL) field. The LLS have been used by educators and learners globally to aid the process and to achieve the goals of language learning. Many researchers had conducted studies about LLS where the findings presented show its efficacy across different groups of learners and demonstrate the effectiveness of its practical implementation (Ranjan et. al., 2021). LLS utilized by different groups of pupils will result in different results and degrees of efficacy. For instance, differences in LSS can be seen in gender as female students show preferences in memory strategies while male students use compensation strategy the most. The LLS preferences might also be affected by the learners' levels of proficiency and grade. Despite teaching ESL for many years, some educators might not know the best activities to be conducted in the classroom for their ESL of EFL learners. This is because the pupils have different levels of proficiency and have different preferences in strategies of learning English. Due to that, teachers need to determine the learners' preferences in LLS as a preparation in planning and creating a language learning plan for them.

Therefore, the upcoming research on LLS should address and highlight learners' proficiency levels in relations with LLS. Hence, this systematic review aims to review the current trends and research in the language learning strategy used by learners with different English proficiency levels, with two research questions as follow:

RQ1: What are the most and the least preferred LLS?
RQ2: What is the relationship between the LLS used by learners' with different English proficiency levels?

Language Learning Strategies

Language Learning Strategies are particular actions employed by language learners to make their foreign language skills development easier (Grey & Oxford, 1995) They incorporate and give awareness and conscious mastery over language learning (Scraw, 1998), thus making the learners' autonomy increase and making the learning process faster, simpler, more enjoyable and more self-directed and effective (Little, 1991). Researchers had given a variety of definitions to the term of language learning strategies. Chamot (1987) had defined them as ways, deliberate actions or techniques that learners implement to help them learn and recall both content and linguistics information. Further, Oxford (1990) has regarded these strategies as particular actions that learners employ to make their learning faster, effective, easier, more self-directed, more enjoyable and more transferable to fresh contexts. Similarly, Wenden (1991) defined them as mental operations or steps that a learner uses to learn a foreign language and to coordinate his effort to do so. In addition, Macintryre (1994) describes these strategies as the intended actions that language learners select to facilitate their language communication and acquisition. Likewise, Richards et. al. (1992) referred language learning strategies as intended thoughts and behaviors that learners employ during learning to better assist them to learn, remember and understand new information.

These definitions emphasize the essential role of these strategies in learning a target language. In general, although researchers have provided a variety of definitions for these strategies, we can conclude that these definitions have similar elements where these

strategies are procedures, techniques, steps, actions or approaches that learners consciously use in the process of language learning. Recently, Oxford (2017) did a content analysis of 33 existing definitions involving LLS and similar concepts. She itemized the most frequently occurring characteristics of the available definitions in the research literature and utilized the results to create an inclusive definition. This new definition also reflects the development in the LLS field research and included the additional concepts during its development, which is produced below.

"L2 learning strategies are complex, dynamic thoughts and actions, selected and used by learners with some degree of consciousness in specific contexts in order to regulate multiple aspects of themselves (such as cognitive, emotional and social) for the purpose of (a) accomplishing language tasks; (b) improving language performance or use; and/or (c) enhancing long-term proficiency. Strategies are mentally guided but may also have physical and therefore observable manifestations. Learners often use strategies flexibly and creatively; combine them in various ways, such as strategy clusters or strategy chains; and orchestrate them to meet learning needs. Strategies are teachable. Learners in their contexts decide which strategies to use. Appropriateness of strategies depends on multiple personal and contextual factors" (p. 48)

Classifications of Language Learning Strategies

Ellis (1994) referred to the concept of strategies as "fuzzy" and "elusive". The classifying of LLS had been frequently debated since the beginning of the research in the LLS arena. Researchers always face problems in classifying and categorizing the strategies employed by the students due to several reasons such as environmental factors (including the context), unobservable strategies, the individual differences in learning and learners' variables such as age, gender, motivation, etc. Rubin (1981) pointed out two type of learning strategies, which are direct (which contributes directly to language learning like clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing/inductive reasoning, etc) and indirect (creating practice opportunities, using production tricks using such as circumlocutions, synonyms or formulaic interaction). O'Malley et. al. (1990 created a taxonomy with three major types i.e. metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective. Later, based on Rubin's direct/indirect contrast Oxford (1990) had further classified the strategies into six subdivisions: memory, cognitive, compensation (in direct strategy) and metacognitive, affective and social (in the indirect category)

However, the classification in the Oxford's taxonomy of language learning strategy (SILL in Oxford, 1990) that has been recognized as the most comprehensive and that is the Oxford's taxonomy of language learning strategy (SILL in Oxford, 1990). In this taxonomy, there are 6 strategies that are divided into direct and indirect ones. The former directly involves target language through revising and practicing, while the latter indirectly eases the process of language learning through planning, collaborating and finding opportunities(Oxford, 1990). Direct language learning strategies are memory (related to learning and sorting out new information via sounds, images, body movements and other ways), compensation (related to compensating for their knowledge gaps through the use of synonyms, talking about the missing word, etc) and cognitive strategies (related to thinking about the language, further analysis, note-taking and summarizing to produce knowledge structures). On the other hand, indirect strategies include affective (related to the ability to identify feelings and discuss them, as well as the use of positive self-encouragement), metacognitive (which include good

management of the learning process through planning tasks and evaluating accomplishment, etc.) and social strategies (which involve an interaction with other students as a significant component of the learning process through asking for help and clarification).

Language learning strategies and language achievement

The language learning strategies have been closely associated with L2 proficiency in much research and study (Agothopoulou, 2016) with more frequent usage of LLS having been shown by higher proficiency students compared to lower proficiency students (Habok & Magyar, 2018a). Generally, English proficiency was measured through self-ratings, results of proficiency and achievement tests, and scores of English courses (Habok & Magyar, 2018b). Many studies exhibit a positive relationship between language learning strategy used and proficiency level (Ali & Paramasivam, 2016; Green & Oxford, 1995; Radwan, 2011; Charoento, 2016). According to Sartika et. al (2019), most strategy which includes cognitive, metacognitive, compensation, affective and social shows significant association with L2 proficiency in different ESL and EFL contexts.

A recent study by Alfian (2016) on Indonesian high school students with different proficiency levels shows that metacognitive strategy was most often used by high proficiency students while the less proficient students used cognitive strategy most often. Another study done on undergraduates EFL students in Thailand by Abdul-Ghafour & Alrefaee (2019) showed almost similar results where the high proficiency students used metacognitive strategies while less proficient students used the most social strategies. In another study by Rao (2005), the findings showed that the higher achieving-students in a Yemeni University use metacognitive, compensatory and cognitive strategies more often while those less frequently used were social, memory and affective strategies. Another study on Taiwanese EFL students revealed that the language learning strategies chosen by the pupils were significantly affected by their English proficiency, where the high-level students used more strategies frequently than the low-level students, especially the cognitive, metacognitive and social strategies. All these findings indicate that efficient students are able to plan, control, review and evaluate their learning while the less efficient students put more focus on their way of thinking, memorizing, summarizing and repeating their learning (Magogwe & Oliver, 2017a). This was supported by Magogwe and Oliver (2017b) where their study discovered that the basic differences in the usage of LLS between more successful and less successful students were that not only the more successful students often utilize more strategies in their learning process, but they also chose the most suitable strategy according on the goals of their assignment.

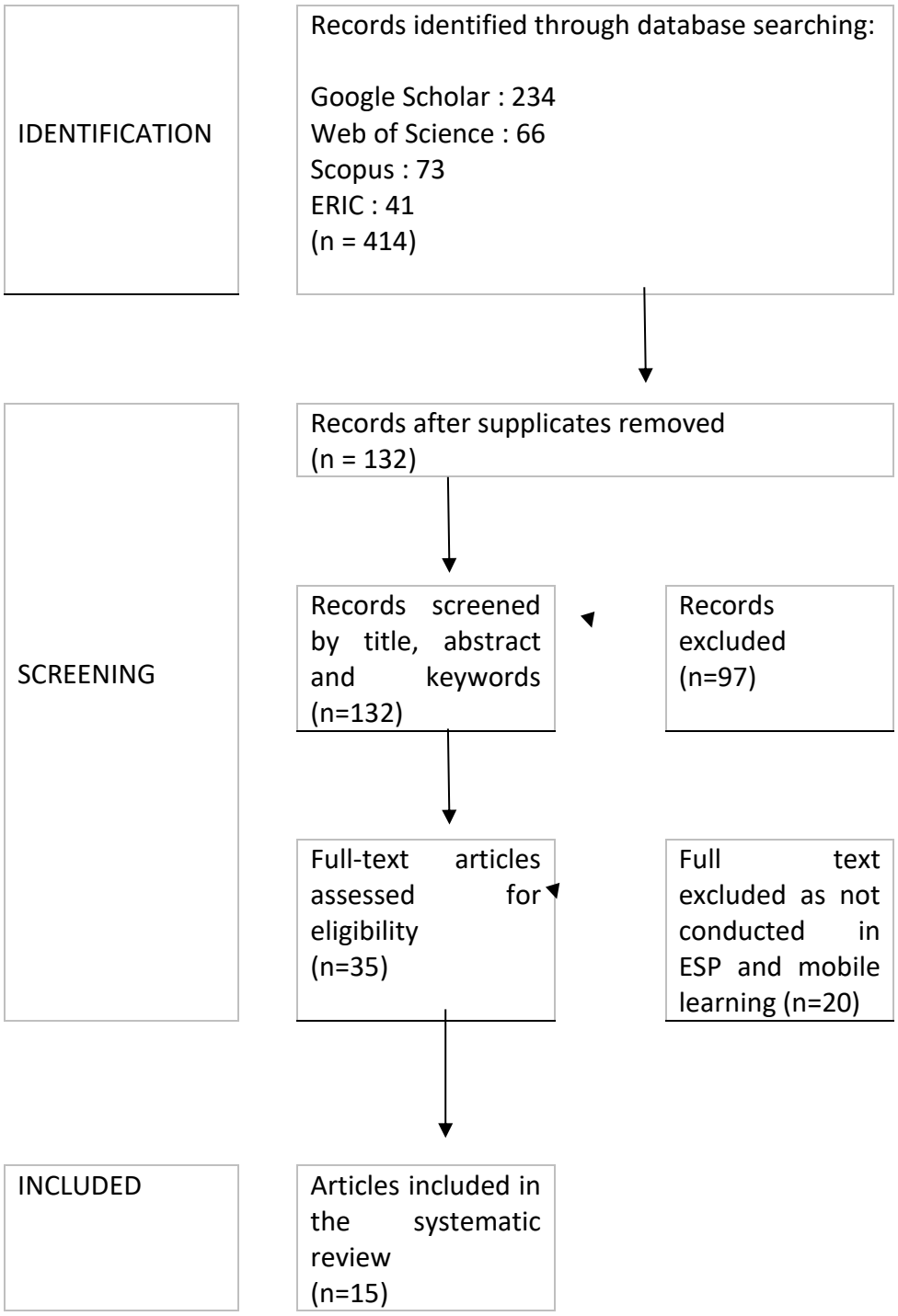
It can be concluded from the findings of all these studies that the EFL or ESL learners' English proficiency level plays a vital role in their choice of LLS. Learners with high proficiency levels use more strategies compared to the low proficiency students. Preferences in the usage of LLS need to be conducted in different contexts for future research.

Materials and Methods

The method used to conduct this systematic literature review is The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 checklist. There are 27 criteria included in the PRISMA checklist to help with transparency in a systematic review. The research approach used in this systematic literature review was the comparative research

approach or namely descriptive comparison. As this paper aims to determine the preferences of LLS and the LLS used by pupils with different English proficiency levels, this paper serves as a systematic overview on the preferences of LLS and the usage of LLS by pupils with different proficiency levels reported in previous studies.

The goal of this systematic literature review is to provide readers with a better understanding of the preferences in LLS shown by pupils with various backgrounds, particularly in the most and the least preferred strategies as well as the comparison of the strategies used by pupils with different English proficiency levels. The information gathered for this review consisted of online published articles. The articles reported in this systematic review sourced from four main databases, which are Scopus, WoS, ERIC and Google Scholar. The processing of the literature was done based on journals dated between 2013 to 2022. In this study, the researcher utilized four phases to carry out the analysis. These include the identification phase, screening phase, eligibility phase and inclusion phase.



Phase 1: Identification Phase

n this phase, the relevant work for review purposes was identified and collected using an online database search engine. Four databases were used to collect the relevant works which are WoS, Scopus, ERIC and Google Scholar. The key terms included in this systematic review were carefully constructed to get the accurate construct to be reviewed. Several words

related to Language Learning Strategy and language proficiency were included. Table 1 below shows the search string used in each database for this study.

Table 1
Search string used in this study.

Database	Search String
Google Scholar	Language learning strategy and english proficiency level
ERIC	Language learning strategy and english proficiency level
Web of Science (WoS)	TS = (("Language Learning Strategy*" OR "LLS*") AND ("english proficiency level*" OR "english level*" OR "english achievement*"))
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("Language Learning Strategy*" OR "LLS*") AND ("english proficiency level*" OR "english level*" OR "english achievement*"))

Phase 2: Screening Phase

The next step after identifying the relevant articles to be reviewed is the screening process. In this stage, duplicate articles that appear in more than one database were excluded. On the first screening step, 97 articles were removed after its title, abstract, and keywords were screened. These steps resulted in 35 articles eligible for the second screening. In the second screening, 35 articles were excluded due to their unrelatedness towards the study. Most of the studies excluded did not provide the construct of 'english proficiency level'. After exclusion, the remaining 20 articles were screened by inclusion and exclusion criteria as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for screening phase.

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Studies conducted within 10 years (between 2013-2022)	Studies conducted before 2013
Articles from journals	Conference proceeding, review articles, book chapters, reports
Free access	Need to be charges to get the article
Written in English	Written in language other than Engish
Related to Language Learning Strategies and English proficiency level	Not related to Language Learning Strategies and English proficiency level

Phase 3: Eligibility Phase

In the third phase, the gathered articles were reviewed for eligibility where the articles need to match the criteria outlined in Table 2's inclusion section. This is an important step to make sure that the data presented in this systematic review were high quality, dependable and meet the needs of the construct.

Phase 4: Exclusion Phase

After checking the eligibility of the articles, the remaining articles were exclude from this systematic literature review. The criteria of the excluded articles are stated in Table 2.

The exclusion was crucial in ensuring that the articles collected have high-quality data and meet the needs of the researcher. After the final stage, there were 15 articles left to be reviewed in this systematic literature review. All these articles provides information about the language learning strategies employed by pupils and its relation with their English proficiency levels. Most of the analyzes articles were conducted in quantitative method. The respondents from all the studies vary from all levels of education.

Results

The findings taken from all the articles reviewed will be presented in this section. After the screening phase was done. 15 articles were chosen to be appropriate in this systematic review. Many different researchers have presented their studies about the overall usage of language learning strategies and the preferences of the strategies among pupils with different proficiency levels as listed in

Table 3

Belowtable 3. Summary of results reviewed from selected studies.

<table>
<tr><th>NO</th><th>AUTHOR/YEAR/ TITLE</th><th>RESOURCES</th><th>COUNTRY</th><th>AIM</th><th>METHODS/ INSTRUMENT</th><th>PARTICIPANTS</th><th>FINDINGS</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Becirovic et. al (2017)</td><td>WoS</td><td>Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria)</td><td>To investigate the grade level, GPA and gender-based differences in the use of LLS.</td><td>Quantitative method research SILL, questionnaire (demographic items, student's grade level, overall GPA, GPA in English, gender age)</td><td>206 students studying in high school in Bosnia and Herzegovina M : 114 F : 92</td><td>Preferences of LLS : metacognitive, cognitive, compensation, social, memory, affective
<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Low</th><th>Medium</th><th>High</th></tr>
<tr><td>Memory</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compensation</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Affective</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr>
<tr><td>social</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Ranjan et al (2021)</td><td>WoS</td><td>Asian (India)</td><td>To examine the relationship between the use of strategies by Indian undergraduate university students in learning Spanish as a FL with its language proficiency and to analyse the use of LLS by successful students.</td><td>Mixed method SILL, BIQ, two open-ended questions Spearman's rho test</td><td>65 students from two universities, 19 Year 1 15 Year 2 31 Year 3, 38 female 27 male, age 18-27</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Top 15</th><th>The rest</th></tr>
<tr><td>Memory</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compensation</td><td>2</td><td>6</td></tr>
<tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Affective</td><td>6</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>social</td><td>5</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Taheri et al (2019)</td><td>WoS</td><td>Iran</td><td>1. to explore the</td><td>Quantitative</td><td>188 Iranian EFL</td><td>EFL learners' language achievement enhances as the use of cognitive,</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>relationship between EFL learners cognitive intelligences, emotional intelligences and language learning achievement
2. to find out the relationship between EFL learners LLS and strategies and their L2 achievement
3. to uncover the relationship between EFL learners emotional and cognitive intelligences and their use of learning styles and strategies</td><td>research design Raven's Progressive Matrices, Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, Kolb's Learning Style Inventory, SILL, Final Test of EFL Pearson Correlation</td><td>learners, second sem of academic year, 19-35 years old</td><td>compensation and social strategies increases.
All types of LLS were not significantly correlated with learners' L2 achievement</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Rianto (2020)</td><td>WoS</td><td>Indonesia</td><td>This study was carried out to investigate the following RQ:
1. Which group of Indonesian university</td><td>Descriptive and quantitative methods
RQ 1 : comparing means
RQ 2 : comparing and ranking</td><td>329 undergraduate EFL students
M : 147
F : 182

Division through scores obtained In an English test :</td><td>No significant differences between students with lower and higher English proficiency in the use of six strategy categories and in the use of the overall strategies.
Higher English skills students used the overall LLS slightly more (3.76) than students with lower English skills (3.73)
<table>
<tr><td></td><td>Higher</td><td>Lower</td></tr>
<tr><td>Memory</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compensation</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr>
<tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Affective</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>social</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

				students based on gender, study programs and English proficiency used overall language learning strategies more frequently in their EFL learning? 2. Which strategy categories were the most and the least used by the students? 3. What were the levels of the students' LLS use? 4. Were there significant differences in the use of LLS based on gender, study programs and English proficiency?	means of LLS RQ 3 : mean scores of each strategy were classified using the Oxford's scale of strategy use RQ 4 : independent t-test with a p-value of 0.05 SILL	Lower – 246 (score 460 above) Higher – 83 (score less than 460)	Both higher and lower English skills students used memory, cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social strategy at high level and compensation strategy at moderate level.
5	Alrashidi (2022)	WoS	Saudi Arabia	To explore the frequency and type if LLS employed and the impact of proficiency levels, gender	Descriptive statistic (means, SD and ranks of LLS) & ANOVA SILL	256 Year 1-4 English major students from 3 universiities in Saudi Arabia M : 71 F : 185	Overall LLS preferences : metacognitive, compensation, cognitive, social, affective, memory Low / Medium / High Memory 6 6 6 Cognitive 4 4 3 Compensation 2 2 2 Metacognitive 1 1 1 Affective 2 3 5 social 5 5 4

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>and year of study on the use of LLS</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Alfian (2018)</td><td>SCOPUS</td><td>Indonesia</td><td>To explore the relationship between language proficiency level and LLS choice</td><td>Descriptive statistics (mean, frequencies, percentages and SD) ANOVA: for overall use of SILL strategies SILL</td><td>284 undergraduate students in EFL teacher education faculty</td><td><table><tr><th></th><th>Low</th><th>Medium</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>Memory</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Compensation</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Affective</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>social</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>Feleciya & Meenakshi (2016)</td><td>SCOPUS</td><td>India</td><td>1. to identify the overall strategies by the female students while learning L2
2. to find the commonly employed direct and indirect strategies by these students
3. to find relationship between English proficiency and LLS</td><td>Instrument: SILL Data analyse: statistical package STATA 13.0 Descriptive analysis</td><td>200 first year tertiary level undergraduates, age 17-20</td><td>SILL vs. Language Proficiency<table><tr><th></th><th>Me</th><th>Cog</th><th>Com</th><th>Meta</th><th>Aff</th><th>So</th></tr><tr><td>Below 40 %</td><td>3.68 (4)</td><td>3.70 (3)</td><td>3.51 (6)</td><td>3.81 (2)</td><td>3.90 (1)</td><td>3.67 (5)</td></tr><tr><td>41-50 %</td><td>3.67 (5)</td><td>3.68 (4)</td><td>3.54 (6)</td><td>3.89 (1)</td><td>3.71 (3)</td><td>3.73 (2)</td></tr><tr><td>51-60 %</td><td>3.48 (4)</td><td>3.43 (5)</td><td>3.41 (6)</td><td>3.71 (1)</td><td>3.53 (3)</td><td>3.68 (2)</td></tr><tr><td>61-70 %</td><td>3.50 (5)</td><td>3.65 (4)</td><td>3.43 (6)</td><td>3.87 (1)</td><td>3.71 (2)</td><td>3.71 (2)</td></tr><tr><td>71-80 %</td><td>3.53 (4)</td><td>3.53 (4)</td><td>3.48 (6)</td><td>3.74 (1)</td><td>3.65 (2)</td><td>3.54 (3)</td></tr><tr><td>Above 80 %</td><td>3.76 (4)</td><td>3.58 (5)</td><td>3.53 (6)</td><td>4.14 (1)</td><td>3.91 (3)</td><td>3.96 (2)</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>8</td><td>Ismail & Al Khatib (2013)</td><td>SCOPUS</td><td>UAE</td><td>1. identify the general pattern of English LLS by the students
2. investigating the relations</td><td>Descriptive data (means, range, frequencies, SD) SILL Arabic translated</td><td>190 male and female students in the foundation program of the UAEU
M : 59
F : 131</td><td><table><tr><th></th><th>Me</th><th>Cog</th><th>Com</th><th>Meta</th><th>Soc</th><th>aff</th></tr><tr><td>Level 1</td><td>2.73 (6)</td><td>2.88 (5)</td><td>3.22 (3)</td><td>3.39 (1)</td><td>3.28 (2)</td><td>3.04 (4)</td></tr><tr><td>Level 2</td><td>2.73 (6)</td><td>2.94 (4)</td><td>3.15 (3)</td><td>3.27 (1)</td><td>3.26 (2)</td><td>2.94 (4)</td></tr><tr><td>Level 3</td><td>2.51 (6)</td><td>2.89 (4)</td><td>3.03 (3)</td><td>3.31 (1)</td><td>3.15 (2)</td><td>2.87 (5)</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>hip between the use of LLS and the language proficiency at level 1-3?
3. investigating the relationship between male and female students use of LLS</td><td></td><td>18-21 years old</td><td>ANOVA summary indicates that proficiency levels had no significant effects on the overall strategy use nor on each of the six categories,</td></tr>
<tr><td>9</td><td>Sukying (2021)</td><td>ERIC</td><td>Thailand</td><td>Investigates the LLS used by Thai EFL university students, identify the relationship and the differences in LLS use across clusters of academic study</td><td>Descriptive analysis (means and SD)
ANOVA
Instruments: Questionnaire (demographic bg and SILL)
General English Test (GET)</td><td>1523
Year 1 students enrolled in a general English course
M : 448
F : 1075</td><td>Most frequent overall use : affective, metacognitive, compensation, cognitive, social and memory
The correlation between LLS use and proficiency are positively linear. In general, the magnitude of correlations between LLS and proficiency was in the range of 0.17-0.36, suggesting a small association.
Similarly, the correlation coefficients of LLS use and English proficiency were statistically significant, indicating a significant, albeit weak, relationship between LLS and performance on GET and ONET for all academic clusters.</td></tr>
<tr><td>10</td><td>Malpartida (2021)</td><td>ERIC</td><td>Peru</td><td>To develop a longitudinal assessment of students' use of LLS, examine their English proficiency and report their perception on online English instruction during the new normal in</td><td>Mixed method
Quantitative : quasi-exp design
Qualitative : structured phone interview design
SILL,OPT Oxford placement test (measures English</td><td>50 undergraduate students who participated in an online high intermediate English course for 16 weeks</td><td>LLS was used in online English course

English proficiency differences between experimental group (online instruction with LLS program) and control group (online instruction only)
<table>
<tr><td>Pre-SILL</td><td>Experimental</td><td>Control</td></tr>
<tr><td>Memory</td><td>3.03</td><td>3.00</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>3.21</td><td>3.21</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compensation</td><td>3.20</td><td>3.09</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
<tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>3.50</td><td>3.51</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
<tr><td>Affective</td><td>3.21</td><td>3.31</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
<tr><td>social</td><td>3.30</td><td>3.18</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr>
<td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Lima-Peru</td><td>proficiency) Independent t-test, thematic analysis</td><td></td>
<td>
<table>
<tr><td>Post-SILL</td><td>Experimental</td><td>Control</td></tr>
<tr><td>Memory</td><td>3.38</td><td>2.88</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">significantly different</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>3.82</td><td>3.10</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">significantly different</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compensation</td><td>3.93</td><td>3.26</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">significantly different</td></tr>
<tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>4.25</td><td>3.35</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">significantly different</td></tr>
<tr><td>Affective</td><td>3.66</td><td>3.48</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
<tr><td>Social</td><td>3.72</td><td>3.45</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">No significant diff</td></tr>
</table>
Experimental group : cognitive-compensation-metacognitive-social-affective-memory
Control group – medium use in all LLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td><td>Mutar (2018)</td><td>ERIC</td><td>Iraq</td><td>To investigate the LLS used among Iraqi sixth grade prep students, and how gender and proficiency level affect on using LLS.</td><td>Descriptive quantitative design, stratified random sampling Independent sample t-test, one-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD</td><td>210 sixth grade prep students
M : 105
F : 105</td>
<td>Overall usage of LLS : high use-cognitive (3.70) and memory (3.31) lowest use- compensation (2.01)
The participants are categorized as medium user
Memory Strategy : middle & high use this more than low proficiency students.
Compensation Strategy : no significant differences
Affective Strategy : no significant differences
Cognitive Strategy : middle & high use this more than low proficiency students.
Metacognitive Strategy : Middle proficiency students use this more than high & low proficiency students.
Social Strategy : High proficiency students use this more than medium & low proficiency students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td><td>Habok & Magyar (2018)</td><td>Google Scholar</td><td>Hungary</td><td>What are the lower secondary school children's strategy use preferences and how these are connected with their foreign language attitude,</td><td>Quantitative research design Descriptive analysis (means, frequencies, SD), ANOVA SILL (online)</td><td>868 lower secondary school students 11-14 y.o.
Y5 : 450
Y8 : 418</td>
<td>General strategy use:
<table>
<tr><td>Strategy</td><td>Y5</td><td>Y8</td></tr>
<tr><td>Memory</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>5</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compensation</td><td>6</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Affective</td><td>2</td><td>6</td></tr>
<tr><td>Social</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table>
<table>
<tr><td>Strategy</td><td>1/2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Memory</td><td>2.42 (6)</td><td>2.88 (2)</td><td>2.96 (3)</td><td>3.21 (3)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>2.51 (5)</td><td>2.75 (4)</td><td>2.90 (4)</td><td>3.15 (5)</td></tr>
</table>
</td>
</tr>
</table>

				proficiency and general school achievement?			<table><tr><td>Compensation</td><td>2.52 (4)</td><td>2.69 (6)</td><td>2.66 (6)</td><td>2.86 (6)</td></tr><tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>2.68 (2)</td><td>2.83 (3)</td><td>3.08 (1)</td><td>3.50 (1)</td></tr><tr><td>Affective</td><td>2.78 (1)</td><td>2.89 (1)</td><td>3.03 (2)</td><td>3.174()</td></tr><tr><td>Social</td><td>2.58 (3)</td><td>2.73 (5)</td><td>2.86 (5)</td><td>3.35 (2)</td></tr></table>
13	Charoento (2016)	Google Scholar	Thailand	To determine the most and least used LLS of Thai EFL undergraduates, the differences in the use of LLS between female and male participants and the significant differences in the use of LLS by self-rated English proficiency applied to those of excellent, good, fair and poor language learner?	Quantitative SILL Descriptive statistics (means, SD, frequencies), ANOVA, independent samplet t-test	392 undergraduates M : 159 F : 233	Frequency of LLS overall usage <table><tr><td>categories</td><td>rank</td><td>use</td></tr><tr><td>Memory</td><td>4</td><td>Low</td></tr><tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>6</td><td>Low</td></tr><tr><td>Compensation</td><td>1</td><td>medium</td></tr><tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>3</td><td>Medium</td></tr><tr><td>Affective</td><td>2</td><td>Medium</td></tr><tr><td>social</td><td>5</td><td>low</td></tr></table> Comparison of LLS and self-rated English proficiency <table><tr><td>Strategy</td><td>excellent</td><td>good</td><td>fair</td><td>poor</td></tr><tr><td>Memory</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>2</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Compensation</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Affective</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>social</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr></table>
14	Wello et al (2018)	Google Scholar	Indonesia	1. How are the Cultural Intelligence Level, LLS use and English proficiency level of the students ?	Correlational research design Instruments: The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS),	87 second year students of English department	LLS and English Language Proficiency <table><tr><td></td><td>High</td><td>Low</td></tr><tr><td>Memory</td><td>3.196 (5)</td><td>3.176 (5)</td></tr><tr><td>Cognitive</td><td>3.432 (3)</td><td>3.380 (2)</td></tr><tr><td>Compensation</td><td>3.514 (2)</td><td>3.312 (3)</td></tr><tr><td>Metacognitive</td><td>3.841 (1)</td><td>3.660 (1)</td></tr><tr><td>Affective</td><td>2.976 (6)</td><td>3.114 (6)</td></tr></table>

				2. Is there any differences in Cultural Intelligence Level, LLS use and English proficiency level of the students by gender? 3. Is there a relationship between Cultural Intelligence Level, LLS use and English proficiency level among the English department students?	SILL and TOEFL Data analysis: Descriptive and inferential statistics		Social 3.413 (4) 3.232 (4) TOTAL 3.419 3.346
15	Ozgul Balci & Selma Durak Uguten (2018)	Google Scholar	Turkey	To address the following RQ: 1. What are the most and least frequently used LLS by English preparatory class EFL learners? 2. Does students' frequency of LLS use and foreign language achievement differ significan	Descriptive study in relational screening model SILL	263 EFL university students in English prep class program M : 138 F : 125	Overall usage of LLS Metacognitive-compensation-social-memory-affective-cognitive Among 6 categories of LLS, only cognitive, compensation and metacognitive were correlated with language achievement scores.

				tly by gender? 3. Is there a relationship between learners' LLS use and FL achievement?			

As can be seen in Table 3, all studies were done on learners from different levels of education and context. However, the aim of the studies was almost similar where the researchers are investigating the most and the least frequently used LLS among the learners and the relationship of LLS with their English proficiency level. In addition, most studies also determine the differences of LLS usage among male and female learners. For the instrument, all studies utilize Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford (1990) to determine the LLS usage of the learners. In terms of their ESL or EFL proficiency, it was determined by many methods such as their marks in English course, scores in English test and also English proficiency test such as Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and General English Test (GET). In order to determine the usage of LLS in different proficiency levels, the students were divided into levels such as high and low proficiency; low, fair, good and excellent proficiency; top 15 and the rest; low. medium and high and level one until three.

Discussion

RQ1 : What are the most and the least preferred LLS?

In order to determine the most and the least preferred LLS, the learners participated in the studies were asked to rate the frequency of the six LLS with which they applied in their language learning process using a five-point Likert scale in the SILL, ranging from one being the lowest frequency until five with the highest frequency. After that, the data from the SILL questionnaire will be analyzed using descriptive analysis using frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Besides the preferences of the LLS by the learners, the data can also be used to determine the overall usage of LLS between learners in each group of proficiency level. For example, higher proficiency level pupils use more strategies frequently than lower proficiency pupils (Agus Rianto, 2020a). In addition, the descriptive analysis can also be used to determine the level of LLS as such reported by Rianto (2020b), both higher and lower English skills learners used memory, cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social strategy at high level and compensation strategy at moderate level.

As can be seen in the findings, the strategies that were preferred by the learners the most are metacognitive strategies and followed by other strategies in rank. Besides the preferences on metacognitive strategy, the findings about the learners' preferences on other strategies showed significant differences as the context of the research were all different. This is where the gap of the research should be filled in by future research. According to Oxford (2002) the basic metacognitive strategies include connecting new information to the old one; selecting intended thinking strategies; and planning, monitoring and evaluating thinking processes. This strategy helps the learners by regulating and observing their own learning activities such as taking conscious control of learning, planning and selecting strategies,

monitoring their process of learning, correcting errors, analyzing the effectiveness of learning strategies and changing learning behaviors and strategies when necessary. By applying and practicing metacognitive strategy, students will become good learners who are capable of handling any problem across an English curriculum (Sun, 2013).

RQ2 : What is the relationship between the LLS used by students with different English proficiency levels?

Some findings reviewed in the articles showed no significant differences between the preferences of LLS among learners with different levels of proficiency(Agus Rianto, 2020; Hamidah, et. al., 2019; Sadiq & Ahmad, 2013). However, there are findings which showed a significant albeit weak relationship between LLS and language proficiency level (Sukying, 2021). Besides that, studies by Ozgul & Selma (2018) showed different findings where only cognitive, compensation and metacognitive showed correlation with language achievement scores. As reported in Table 3, learners from all levels of English proficiency had chosen metacognitive as their most preferred LLS and a number of studies had shown compensation and affection as the least preferred of LLS (Ranjan et. el., 2021; Sartika et. al., 2019; Agus Rianto, 2020; Alfian, 2018; Jancy & Meenakshi, 2016; Fernandez-Malpartida, 2021; Qusay, 2018; Rachmawaty et. al., 2018). These results indicate that the learners are reluctant to compensate for limited knowledge, such as guessing meanings from the context in reading and listening and using synonyms and gestures to convey meaning when the precise expression is not known. Besides that, the learners least preferences towards affection strategy indicates that emotional and motivation-related strategies such as anxiety reduction, self-encouragement and self-reward does not facilitate them in language learning (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995).

The study that exhibits no significant relationship between the proficiency level and LLS might affected by the learners' lack of awareness and sufficient background knowledge concerning learning strategies. These factors hinder their utilization of appropriate strategies (Hamidah et. al., 2019). However, the clear indicator of students in all levels of proficiency preference in metacognitive strategies explains that all students are capable to plan clear goals, control, review and evaluate their English learning as well as to focus on the way they think, remember, summarize and repeat learning (Agua Rianto, 2020). Their next preferred strategies that show no uniform pattern and relations to their proficiency level might be affected by their background knowledge, their learning environment, their grades, their learning goals and other unidentified factors. This gap thus calls for clarification that can be investigated in the future research.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this systematic literature review has studied about the most and the least preferred LLS and the relationship between the LLS used with learners' different English proficiency levels. Thus, the gap of not having any systematic review on LLS and the preferences of its strategies has been filled. 15 articles were reviewed in this paper and they were all collected from three databases, namely the Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, ERIC and Google Scholar by using the inclusion and exclusion criteria mentioned above. The main findings highlight two aspects of studies that was intended to be investigated in this study:

1. The most preferred LLS used by the learners is metacognitive strategy while the least preferred strategies are compensation and affective. After descriptive analysis was done on

the findings collected through SILL, metacognitive strategy was ranked number 1 in the preferences of LLS use by learners in all the studies reviewed in this paper. This strategy shows that the learners have the conscious capability to plan, measure and control their thinking process. The next preferred strategy varies in all studies as it may be affected by various factors such as the learners' grade, background knowledge, learning environment and other unidentified factors. The least preferred strategy in most of the studies were compensation strategies. These strategies explain that the learners are reluctant to compensate for their knowledge limitation and are not interested in emotional and motivational-related strategies such as anxiety-reduction, self-encouragement and self-reward to be applied in their language learning process.

2. There is no significant relationship shown between the LLS used and the learners' different English proficiency level. This finding was shown in most of the studies reviewed in this paper except (Sukying, 2021). However, their significant relationship between the LLS and language proficiency levels was weak. The insignificant relationship between LLS and English proficiency level might be affected by factors such as the learners' lack of awareness and sufficient background knowledge concerning language learning strategies.

Based on the findings, we can see that ESL or EFL learners have their own preferred strategies to assist them to learn the language. Despite that, limitations exist in terms of the students' age and grade because most LLS studies focus on tertiary students in universities and colleges. This limitation offers room for future researchers to investigate LLS in other levels of studies. Furthermore, future research can also study the effectiveness of the usage of LLS in increasing the pupils' efficiency in English language. This systematic review contributes in the field of language learning strategies for L2 learners and it benefits practitioners in related fields.

References

Abdul-Ghafour, M., & Alrefaee, Y. (2019). The relationship between language learning strategies and achievement among EFL University Students. *ALR Journal.* 3(3), 64-83.

Agus Rianto. (2020). A study of language learning strategy use among Indonesian EFL university students. *Register Journal*, *13*(2), 231-256.

Alfian, A. (2016). The application of language learning strategies of high school students in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of English Education, 3(2), 140-167.*

Alfian. (2018). Proficiency level and Language Learning Strategy choice of Islamic University Learners in Indonesia. *TEFLIN Journal,* 29(1).

Ali, H. H., & Paramasivam, S. (2016). Language learning strategies across proficiency levels among EFL pre-university students. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research,* 3(4), 135-148.

Balci, O., & Uguten, S. D. (2018). The Relationship between EFL Learners' Language Learning Strategy Use and Achievement. *International Education Studies,* 11(2), 1-12.

Becirovic, S. (2017). The Relationship between Gender, Motivation and Achievement in Learning English as a Foreign Language. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, *6*(2), 210-220.

Chamot, A. U. (1987). The learning strategies of ESL students. In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 71-83). Prentice Hall.

Charoento, M. (2016). Individual learner differences and language learning strategies. *Contemporary Educational Researchers Journal,* 7(2), 57-72.

Ellis, R. (1994). The study of second language acquisition. Oxford University Press.

Fernandez-Malpartida, W. M. (2021). Language learning strategies, English proficiency and online English instruction perception during Covid-19 in Peru. *International Journal of Instruction,* 14(4), 155-172.

Green, J., & Oxford, R. L. (1995). A closer look at learning strategies, L2 proficiency, and gender. *TESOL Quarterly,* 29(2), 261-297.

Habok, A., & Magyar, A. (2018). The effect of language learning strategies on proficiency, attitudes and school achievement. *Frontiers in Psychology,* 8, Article 2358, 1-8.

Jancy, A. N. F., & Meenakshi, K. (2016). English Language Learning Strategies used by Female ESL Learners of Vellore district – An Empirical Studies. *Indian Journal of Science and Methodology.* 9(39).

Lessard, M. (1997). Language Learning Strategies: An Overview for L2 Teachers. *Essays in Language and Literatures, 8.*

Little, D. G. (1991). Learner autonomy: Definitions, issues and problems. *Authentik Language Learning Resources.*

Magogwe, J. R., & Oliver, R. (2007). The relationship between language learning strategies, proficiency, age, and self-efficacy beliefs: a study of language learners in Botswana. *System,* 35, 338-352.

Marlntyre, P. D. (1994). Towards a social psychological model of strategy use. *Foreign Language Annals.* 27(2), 185-195.

O'Malley, J., & Chamot, A. (1990). Language learning strategies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oqab Alrashidi. (2022). Assessing language learning strategies employed by university English major students in Saudi Arabia. *Cogent Education,* 9:1, 2074935.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know. Newbury House.

Oxford, R. L., & Burry-Stock, J. A. (1995). Assessing the use of language learning strategies worldwide with the ESL/EFL version of the Strategies Inventory for Language Learning. *System,* 23(2), 153-175.

Oxford, R. L. (2002). Language learning strategies. In R. Carter and D. Nunan (Eds.) *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages,* pp 166-172.

Oxford, R. L. (2017). Teaching and researching language learning strategies. New York: Routledge.

Rachmawaty, N., Wello, M. B., Akil, M., & Dollah, S. (2018). Do Cultural Intelligence and Language Learning Strategies Influence Students' English Language Proficiency?. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research,* 9(3), 655-663.

Ranjan, R., Philominraj, A., & Saavedra, R. A. (2021). On the Relationship between Language Learning Strategies and Language Proficiency in Indian Universities. *International Journal of Instruction*, *14*(3), 73-94.

Rao, Z. (2005). Gender, academic major, and Chinese students' use of language learning strategies: Social and educational perspectives. *The Journal of Asia TEFL,* 2, pp 115-138.

Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics.

Ridley, D. S., Schuts, P. A., Glanz, R. S., & Weinstein, C. E. (1992). Self-regulated learning: the interactive influence of metacognitive awareness and goal setting. *Journal of Experimental Education,* 60, 293-306.

Rubin, J. (1981). Study of cognitive processes in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics,* 2(2), 117-131.

Sadiq, A., Ahmed, I., & Ahmad, A. (2013). Investigating the Language Learning Strategies of Students in the Foundation Program of United Arab Emirates University. *International Education Studies,* 6(9).

Sartika, D. H. M., Santihastuti, A., & Wahjuningsih, E. (2019). The learning strategies used by EFL students in learning English. *Indonesian Journal of English Education,* 6(1), 10-20.

Scraw, G. (1998). Promoting general metacognitive awareness. *Instructional Science.* 26(1), 113-125.

Sukying, A. (2021). Choices of language learning strategies and English proficiency of EFL university learners. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network,* 14(2), 58-87.

Sun, L. (2013). The effect of metacognitive learning strategies on English learning. *Theory and practice in Language studies,* 3(11), 68-73.

Qusay, M. M. (2018). Language Learning Strategy Use and English Proficiency of Iraqi Upper Secondary School Students. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies,* 9(4), 59-67.

Wenden, A. (1991). Learner strategies for learner autonomy. *Prentice Hall.*

Wenden, A. L., & Rubin, J. (Eds.) (1987).Learner strategies in language learning. Prentice Hall.