

Listening and Speaking Strategies: Investigating the Preference of ESL Learners in a Malaysian Private School

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Abstract

Listening and speaking are considered as major elements in language learning yet practising them is perhaps challenging for students these days. Students become demotivated when they feel it is difficult to comprehend or share information in the language they are learning. However, the use of suitable strategies could possibly get the students to master the language. Therefore, selecting the appropriate techniques may assist learners in improving their listening and speaking skills. Thus, this study mainly aims to investigate the listening and speaking strategies employed by intermediate as well as advanced ESL learners. An online survey was conducted among 60 ESL learners from a private school. The questionnaire was adopted and adapted from the Language Strategy Use Survey by Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2002). Findings of the study show that the highly used strategies by advanced and intermediate learners in the survey are compensation strategy. This strategy has helped them to develop their listening and speaking skills when learning the language. Students tend to use metacognitive, cognitive, memory, social, compensation, and affective strategies as an approach to strengthen their listening and speaking skills. The reason might be because the strategies that were proposed in the survey were easy to practise, and be implemented in the future. The end result of this study shows that utilizing suitable strategies helps students to develop their skills in language learning.

Keywords: Listening and Speaking, Language Learning Strategies, English as a Second Language (ESL)

Introduction

Language learning strategies have become part of English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching and learning for decades. Oxford (1990a) defined language learning strategies as “purposeful, conscious (or at least partially conscious), mental actions that the learner uses to meet one or more self-chosen goals such as, (a) overcoming a learning barrier, (b) accomplishing an L2

task, (c) enhancing long-term L2 proficiency and (d) developing better self-regulation (ability to guide one's own learning)" (p. 82). An effective strategy provides positive support for the learners to learn and use the target language and it is supposed to explicitly assist learners in their attempt to enhance their knowledge of the language (Cohen, Weaver & Li, 1996). Hence, educators ought to be aware of the strategies commonly used and preferred by these learners or they could even teach ESL learners on how to employ these strategies in order to facilitate the entire learning process.

In the past, a substantial amount of research was conducted focusing predominantly on either the nature of the strategies used as suggested in Strategy Inventory of Language Learning designed by Oxford (1990) (see Hashim & Sahil, 1994; Rao, 2006; Wu, 2008) or all the four key skills of ESL i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing without singling them out. In the last decade however, more studies have been conducted to investigate strategies used in each specific language skill and whether these strategies used are affected by certain factors (see Maharani et al., 2018; Nordin et al., 2013; Shirkhani & Meigouni, 2020). This somewhat proves that the focus has now shifted to either individual skills or factors affecting the choice or use of these strategies.

Naturally, the strategies to enhance each skill may vary. A number of language learning strategies may not be available when one is listening as one relies largely on his memory as well as instant comprehension in breaking down the spoken text whereas in comprehending written texts, a larger variety of strategies are directly available (Ridgway, 2000). On the other hand, Mistar and Umamah (2014) conducted a study focusing on strategies used in improving speaking skills and found that the enhancement in speaking proficiency is not necessarily assisted by all learning strategies.

In Malaysian education system, ESL skills development is stressed upon not only implicitly in individual classrooms but also explicitly in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. Bilingual ability is one of the six aspirations in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 with the general expectation that learners will not only be able to communicate in their first language but also in English in their future workplace (KPM, 2013). The term "communicate" here largely involves two main skills namely listening and speaking. These two skills are interrelated as one listens so that he could eventually speak and one speaks in order to be listened to. As Nunan (1998) affirmed, with listening being the "Cinderella" skill in ESL learning, strategies for productive listening should be part of learning.

In addition, numerous factors have been associated with learners' choice of strategies and according to Oxford (1994) one of these factors is their level of proficiency. Syafryadin et al. (2020) in their study concluded that competent learners tend to employ a larger variety of compensation strategies in speaking as opposed to those with lower proficiency. Contrarily, Ong et al. (2018) deduced that social strategies are equally employed in speaking by both proficient and weak learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and the choice of strategies are largely affected by the nature of the task instead of their proficiency level. Considering the fact that these two studies are rather recent, the inconclusive findings call for a new research focusing on learners' level of proficiency. Thus, this study mainly aims to investigate the listening and speaking strategies employed by intermediate as well as advanced ESL learners.

Literature Review

Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies have been characterised in a variety of ways since their emergence as a topic in second language acquisition. Saad, Sidek, Baharun, Idrus, and Yunus (2016) stated that, language learning strategy is viewed as a facilitating tool for making language learning easier.

The use of language learning strategies will help the learners to become good language learners. According to Razak and Babikkoi (2014), understanding the differences in strategy employment between successful learners has beneficial pedagogical consequences, since findings may be used to impact and support the achievement of less effective learners. It is also supported by, Hashim, Yunus and Hashim (2018) where they mentioned learners must be able to employ language learning strategies in order to acquire and master a second language and become good language learners.

Rigney (1978) defines LLS as particular procedures or actions conducted by the learner to promote acquisition, retention, retrieval, and performance. In addition, LLS, according to Tudor (1996), is an action made by students with the aim of increasing and developing their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities in a foreign or second language, whether consciously or subconsciously. Moreover, LLS is described by Purpura (1997) as real or perceived mental or behavioural responses that are either directly or indirectly connected to particular phases in the process of second language acquisition. According to Cohen (1998), LLS are intentionally chosen by the learner. LLS may thus be characterised as deliberate, chosen behaviours employed to overcome certain learning difficulties, the type of which varies depending on the nature of the challenge. They are used to memorise information, combine it, or utilise it while speaking or writing. Nevertheless, according to Bayuong, Hashim, and Yunus (2019), LLSs may also be viewed as mental tasks undertaken by learners to comprehend the process of learning another language.

The concepts and behaviours that learners utilise to learn a new language are referred to as language learning strategies (Chamot, 2004). It is necessary for good language learning, and culture influences which learning tactics are favoured and adopted. As mentioned by Wenden (1987), language learning behaviours such as understanding and maintaining the meaning of a second or foreign language, cognitive theories such as learners' strategic understanding of language acquisition, and affective strategies such as learners' motivation and attitudes. Oxford's (1990) categorised system, which is utilised for language abilities such as reading, speaking, writing, and listening, has been utilised to develop English learning methodologies. The tactics are split into two categories: direct and indirect methods. Many researchers have categorised LLS. In what follows, O'Malley (1985) distinguished three types of language acquisition strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio affective. Rubin (1987), a pioneer in the field of learning methods that contribute directly to learning as well as those that contribute indirectly. There are three sorts of methods employed by learners that contribute directly or indirectly to language learning. According to Rubin, learning, communication, and social strategies are three of these strategies.

According to research, educating learners to utilise LLS can help them become successful language learners, which is why LLS are significant. In other words, LSs are methods that aid in the completion of learning tasks (Chamot, 2005). They also allow students to become self-sufficient, lifelong learners, and independent Little (1991) However, other researchers mentioned that they also assist teachers in developing lesson plans (Oxford, 1990; Cohen,

1998; Murat, 2000; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). In conclusion, language learners use LLS as a method of obtaining and processing information for storage and recall.

The use of language learning strategies helps to improve the students' development in learning a language. Kakoty (2020) mentioned that, LLSs are good predictors of how learners approach tasks or problems encountered during the language learning process. A language learner's ability to use a range of language learning techniques effectively can help them enhance their language competence. Aziz and Shah (2020) have concluded that language learning strategies must be explored while creating courses, teaching students, and conducting classroom research. Appropriate learning strategies should be among the first things any ESL/EFL lecturer or researcher considers when trying to improve student learning.

Listening and Speaking Strategies

Yurko and Styfanyshyn (2020) claimed that listening is essential for all forms of good communication. Listening requires extensive emotion, cognitive, and behavioural processes. Listening is sometimes disregarded or may appear less important compared to other language skills, yet it is the language learning skill that is most prominent and utilised the most (Morley, 1999; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). All four language skills; listening, reading, speaking and writing skills works hand in hand for a great language attainment by language learners. The researchers also asserted that in this era of universal communication, extensive reliance towards speaking skill is highly necessary. Effective listening, nevertheless, is just as important as it serves as enormously critical life skill. This imperative skill allows pupils to have a successful and meaningful interaction in their daily life. Listening process that learners undergo will deliver aural response that would impact spoken interaction within learners and operates as the foundation of a successful language acquisition (Dang, Van Au, & Chau, 2021).

Several studies were conducted in the past to emphasize the importance of listening skill for language learners. Feyten (1991) carried out a study stating that people spent most of their time listening (45%), 30% for speaking, 16% for reading and only 9% for writing. This is further supported by a research by Bird (1953) claiming results that students allotted 42% of their verbal interaction time for listening, while 25% for speaking and followed by 18% for writing and remaining 15% for reading. Conversely, Ferris (1998) highlight that language skill used the most in a classroom setting would be listening skill. Based on these studies, it is obvious that effective communication will not be successful without incorporating listening skill. It is vital to have adequate knowledge on classification of listening strategies as it will directly assist teachers and learners in selecting the proper strategies for a smooth listening acquisition. Rubin (1987) declared that two main types of strategies that promote directly towards learners' language learning development which are metacognitive and cognitive strategies. Alternatively, Yurko and Styfanyshyn (2020) claimed that listening from news or advertising outlet that revolves around general knowledge is another alternative that brings great beneficial towards listening attainment. Multimedia materials in teaching and learning process permits a boost in learners' active listening process engagement. This is supported by Ampa (2015) stating that multimedia involvement made from materials like videos and animation in language learning allow on-going response by teachers while learners are listening, thus creating higher concentrated listening interaction.

Speaking skill is another productive language learning skill that has a higher demand in this competitive globalization. Kamaliahet al (2018) define speaking as a crucial element and skill to convey an idea and articulate thoughts within a person to another. Swaran Singh et. al. (2020) further declares that having great speaking skill is the most necessary ability to express

ourselves. Since English language act as a second language as per Malaysia education context (David et al., 2015), abundant methods and strategies adopted by the educators has been done to enhance ESL learners' speaking skills in class as most ESL learners' mother tongue is not English. Canale & Swain (1980) introduced several strategies that instructors could employ in positive speaking strategies teaching. Primarily, the strategy to apply minimal response. Beginner speakers who lack confidence in oral communication can take this opportunity to pause and listen attentively in silence while allowing others to talk, speakers are able to focus on others conversing without the need to plan a simultaneous response. Next, using language to discuss about language. Weaker learners often face trouble in understanding a full conversation, hence, instructors should aid them by encouraging students to use phrases for clarification, ask questions and help for comprehension check. This promotes authentic setting that allow learners to situate themselves in familiar topics, ultimately build a positive learning experience and gain confidence to face various language social situations they may confront in the real world. Sodiqova (2021) further supports that some useful language speaking strategy would be by responding appropriately while listening to others, extending ideas that include various ways to express and idea; turn-taking techniques that provide a safe space to correct whenever mistakes are made; and circumlocution that allow speaker to switch language or made use of readily familiar language context to discuss intricate topics. It is prudent to execute speaking and listening tasks that pertains similar language ability and are authentic yet familiar to learners for a successful language learning acquisition.

Approaches to Enhance Listening and Speaking Skills

Listening and speaking are important skills that should be nurtured in every individual, regardless of their age or status in society. This is due to the fact that it impacts practically every element of life that requires communication such as education, employment, or even their relationship with people around them. There are various strategies usually applied by learners in order to enhance their listening and speaking skills. According to Cohen (2014), learners' strategies are considered as procedures or acts that they intentionally choose to enhance their knowledge or the use of a second language. Many studies have been conducted in this area to identify the strategies that are commonly used by the learners. For instance, Safranji (2015) has claimed that 62% of the participants from the study conducted prefers watching movies with subtitles and believe that subtitles improved their listening comprehension. In this study, the researcher identified that participants were more engaged using media as a platform to enhance their listening skills.

Apart from that, Yurko & Styfanyshyn (2020) claimed that it is essential to listen in on real conversations when learning a foreign language. They claimed that spending time in settings where people are speaking the language, such as cafés, parks, or in public transportation to listen to what others are saying without bothering anybody and to train in listening to common foreign conversations. The researchers also stated that choosing words that have been learned is really useful when attempting to actively listen and enhance foreign language comprehension. Learning a foreign language surely requires extra practise and ways to help learners develop their capacity to master the language. On the other hand, a study that was conducted by Salleh et al (2018) shows the highest mean score of students listening to the teachers and classmates as a method to improve their listening skills. It can be concluded that by observing or guessing what the speakers are saying could help in improving the learners listening skills.

Listening skills may have its own method to be applied and make it better and same goes to speaking skills. A study was conducted by Sherman (2003), where the researcher mentioned today's medium used by most people is video, and individuals spend more time watching video than reading printed materials. While viewing videos, two separate senses are involved at the same time which is seeing and hearing, and it encourages interest in the meaning of words. Furthermore, the researcher stated that authentic content is more inspiring, and people enjoy learning about "actual things." Using authentic materials in enhancing speaking skills is unquestionably useful as most people prefer learning visually. It also helps them to gain confidence where they can practise on their own before applying it in an actual situation. Even though planning ahead usually gives positive results, it is not denied that some people are not comfortable with it which will allow them to make mistakes or make them more anxious. It is in line with a study conducted by Emaliana (2017) where the researcher stated that EFL learners have negative perception towards planning in advance on what to be said as they are generally anxious to ask questions when involved in a situation that requires them to speak. Meanwhile, Kuśnierek (2015) stated that role play is one of the useful strategies that can be used in enhancing speaking skills. The study discovered that adopting role-play activities improves pupils' language skills. This type of task is more enticing to students since they find it amusing to take on the character of someone else and be able to deliver messages using words and gestures. Fauzan (2016), has also conducted a study and the results reveal that the students improved their ability to convey their thoughts and ideas through debate practise significantly. As they were expected to create their arguments from particular motions, the debate activity promoted students' creativity in exploring the language. The motions were made familiar to them so that they could speak freely about the topics. They increased their fluency and confidence by practising speaking in the debate practise. Based on the researchers' previous studies, it can be concluded that there are many strategies that are suitable that can be applied to improve speaking skills and it should be aligned with the effort put by learners.

Methodology

This section discusses the methods used in this study. It consists of five parts that explain the research design, population, research instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis method.

Research Design

This research is in the form of a survey study which is quantitative in nature. The researchers gathered the data through a survey questionnaire. The survey study has helped speed up the process of data collection.

Population

In this study, the population is 16-year-old students from a private school in Malaysia. These students are learners of English as a Second Language (ESL). 60 students altogether participated in this study and among these 60 students, 30 are from the intermediate level while the remaining 30 are from the advanced level. The type of sampling used is purposive sampling as these participants were specifically chosen based on their age and level of proficiency.

Research Instrument

The instrument used is an online questionnaire which was created using Google form. The questions were adopted from Cohen et al. (2002). However, as this study focuses primarily on listening and speaking strategies, the questions taken from the original instrument were only from the aforementioned parts. The instrument consists of 31 items and uses a 4-point Likert scale. The options include '1 - This strategy does not fit me', '2 - I have tried this strategy and would use it again', '3 - I use this strategy and like it' and '4 - I have never used this strategy but am interested in it'. The 31 items are divided into two main sections namely listening and speaking with each section consisting of 16 and 15 questions respectively. The listening section is further separated into five subsections while the speaking section has three subsections which represent the instances in which the strategies will be employed by learners. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was checked by some English teachers before being distributed to the participants.

Data Collection Procedure

An online questionnaire created using Google form was distributed to 60 students from a private school in Malaysia. These learners of English as a Second Language were given the freedom to complete the questionnaire according to their own availability. They could spend as much time as they wanted while answering the questionnaire. Ultimately, these students were given the certainty to be honest in answering the questionnaire as they could remain anonymous.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the questionnaire in this study were analysed through percentage and frequency. A descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to investigate learners' current preference with regard to the strategies.

Findings and Discussion

Demographic Data

Table 1

Demographic Data of the Respondents

GENDER	PROFICIENCY LEVEL (%)	
	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE
MALE	36.7	50
FEMALE	63.3	50

Based on the table above, the analysis indicated that there was an equal number of participants in both advanced and intermediate classes which is 30 participants per class. The advanced class consisted of 11 male and 19 female participants. As for the intermediate class, there were 15 male and 15 female participants.

Listening Strategy Use

Strategies to Increase my Exposure in English

Table 2

Strategies to Increase Exposure in English

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES TO INCREASE MY EXPOSURE IN ENGLISH (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Attend out-of-class events where English is spoken.	16.7	26.7	13.3	43.3	16.7	33.3	10	40
2. Listen to talk shows on the radio, watch TV shows, or see movies in English language.	3.3	13.3	76.7	6.7	13.3	46.7	33.3	6.7
3. Listen in on people who are having conversations in English, to try to catch the gist of what they are saying.	6.7	50	36.7	6.7	20	56.7	20	3.3

The table above discusses the strategies used to increase participants' exposure in English. The strategies provided to the participants were (1) attending out of class events, (2) listening to talk shows on the radio or watching television, and (3) listening in on conversation between people. As stated on the table for item 1, the majority of the participants from the advanced class (43.3 %) have never used this strategy. However, they are interested in it. In addition, 40 % of the participants in the intermediate group had never used the same strategy but were also interested in it. The participants that have attended out of class events are 26.7 % from the advanced group and 33.3 % from the intermediate group. The findings also indicated that the participants would use it again in the future.

Based on the findings for item 2, 76.7 % of the participants from the advanced group have used this strategy and they like it. Majority of the participants from the advanced group seem to enjoy listening to talk shows on the radio and watching television shows. However, 46.7% of the majority participants in the intermediate group have used this strategy and would like to try it again. We could imply that; movies and television shows are the most prominent among learners.

In comparison for item 3, the findings showed that 50 % of the participants from the advanced group and 56.7 % of the participants from the intermediate group have tried listening to

conversation between people to catch the gist of what they are saying and would use it again. Besides that, 36.7 % and 20 % from the advanced and intermediate group said that they have used this strategy and liked it.

Strategies to Become More Familiar With The Sounds in English

Table 3

Strategies to Become More Familiar with the Sound in English

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES TO BECOME MORE FAMILIAR WITH THE SOUND IN ENGLISH (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
4. Imitate the way native speakers talk.	16.7	33.3	20	30	26.7	16.7	33.3	23.3

The table above shows the strategies used by the participants to become more familiar with the sounds in English. In this section, the strategies discussed were the way participants imitate native speakers. From the findings, 16.7 % and 26.7 % of the participants from both advanced and intermediate respectively said that the strategy did not fit them. Followed by, the participants from the advanced group (30 %) and intermediate group (23.3 %) mentioned that they have never used this strategy but are interested in it. On the other hand, 33.3 % of the participants from the advanced group have tried this strategy and would use it again. The remaining 20 % of the participants have used this strategy and liked it. In addition, the participants from the intermediate group (16.7 %) stated they have used this strategy as well and would use it again. The majority of the participants, 33.3 %, have used this strategy and liked it as well.

Strategies to Prepare to Listen to Conversation in English

Table 4

Strategies to Prepare to Listen to Conversation in English

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES TO PREPARE TO LISTEN TO CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5. Pay special attention to specific aspects of the language; for example, the way the speaker pronounces certain sounds.	6.7	40	26.7	26.7	26.7	33.3	23.3	16.7

The table above discusses the strategies participants apply in order to prepare to listen to conversation in English. The strategy is to pay special attention to specific aspects of the language such as the speaker pronouncing certain sounds. The findings indicated that 6.7 % from the advanced group and 26.7 % of the participants from the intermediate group mentioned that this strategy does not fit them. However, 40 % and 33.3 % from the advanced and intermediate group have tried this strategy and would use it again. The remainder of the participants that have used this strategy and liked it were 26.7 % and 23.3 % from the advanced and intermediate group respectively.

Strategies to Listen to Conversation in English

Table 5

Strategies to Listen to Conversation in English

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES TO LISTEN TO CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
6. Listen for important phrases that appear to convey the majority of the message.	6.7	36.7	33.3	23.3	13.3	40	30	16.7
7. Pay attention to when and how long people tend to pause.	13.3	20	26.7	40	13.3	30	40	16.7
8. Try to understand what I hear without translating it word-for-word.	6.7	46.7	43.3	3.3	10	36.7	36.7	16.7
9. Focus on the context of what people are saying.	0	40	43.3	16.7	3.3	56.7	33.3	6.7
10. Listen for specific details to see whether I can understand them.	0	26.7	46.7	26.7	10	53.3	33.3	3.3

The table above discusses a few strategies used to listen to conversation in English. The strategies discussed were (1) listening for important phrases that appear to convey the main of the message, (2) paying attention to when and how long people tend to pause, (3) trying to understand what is heard without translating it word for word, (4) focusing on the context of what people are saying, and (5) listening for specific details to see if it can be understood. Based on item 6, 36.7 % of the participants from the advanced group have tried the strategy and would use it again. The participants from the intermediate group have the majority of the participants (40 %) that have tried listening for important phrases and would use it again. The participants from the advanced and intermediate group have used this strategy and liked it are 33.3 % and 30 % respectively. However, 6.7 % from the advanced group and 13.3% from the intermediate group chose that this strategy did not fit them.

According to item 7, 40% of advanced group members have not tried this method but are interested in it. Similarly, 16.7 percent of intermediate group participants have not paid attention to when and how long individuals tend to halt but are interested in this method. In contrast, 20% of participants in the advanced group had tried and would utilise this method again. Following that, 30% of the individuals in the intermediate group. This strategy was applied and liked by 26.7 % of the participants in the advanced group and 40 percent of the individuals in the intermediate group.

Besides that, item 8 described the strategy of attempting to grasp what people experience without interpreting it word by word. The participants in the advanced group (46.7 %) claimed they had tried this method and would use it again, as did the individuals in the intermediate group (36.7 %). On the other hand, 6.7% and 10 % of the participants from both advanced and intermediate groups feel that this strategy does not fit them.

Item 9 and 10 are relatable where the participants are required to focus on the context that is being discussed and get the main idea from it. Based on the data collected in item 9, 43.3% of advanced learners stated that they have used this strategy and they like it while 56.7% of intermediate learners stated that they have tried it and will use it again. The highest result was also obtained in item 10 where 46.7% of advanced learners and 53.3% of intermediate learners were in the same category. From this result, it can be concluded that participants with different proficiency agree on the use of these strategies to enhance their listening skills. This result is in line with a study conducted by Yurko & Styfanyshyn (2020) where they mentioned when learning foreign language, active listening helps in enhancing the learners' language proficiency and it could be done by listening on real conversations in settings that people are speaking the language such as in public place.

Strategies For When I Do Not Understand Some or Most of What Someone Says in English

Table 6
Strategies for when I Do Not Understand What is Said in English

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES FOR WHEN I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT IS SAID IN ENGLISH (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
11. Ask speakers to repeat what they said if it wasn't clear to me.	10	40	26.7	16.7	3.3	36.7	56.7	3.3

12. Ask speakers to slow down if they are speaking too fast.	10	36.7	20	33.3	13.3	33.3	43.3	10
13. Ask for clarification if I don't understand it the first time around.	0	40	40	20	6.7	36.7	36.7	20
14. Make sensible guesses about the topic based on what has just been said.	6.7	40	50	3.3	20	43.3	23.3	13.3
15. Draw on my general background knowledge to get the main idea.	23.3	13.3	23.3	40	13.3	46.7	13.3	26.7
16. Watch speakers' gestures and general body language to help me figure out the meaning of what they are saying.	6.7	33.3	40	20	10	40	30	20

Item 11 to 16 consist of strategies for when speakers do not comprehend all or most of what someone says in English. From all these strategies, item 11, 12 & 13 falls under social strategy, item 14 & 16 falls under compensation strategy and only item 15 falls under metacognitive strategy. The results that were obtained in this section varied between the advanced and intermediate learners. Item 11, 12 & 13 is relatable as it shows how the listeners seek help from speakers when they do not understand and couldn't grasp the information. As for the advanced learners, the highest percentage for item 11 was 40% and item 12 was 36.7%. These two strategies determined that the participants have tried this strategy and will use it again whereas the intermediate learners had the highest percentage in the same category with item 11 was 56.7% and item 12 was 43.3%.

As for item 13, both advanced and intermediate learners have a tie under option 2, where they have tried the strategy and will use it again and option 3, which they have used the strategy and they like it. The percentage for advanced learners was 40% and the intermediate learner was 36.7% in both options. In this strategy, the advanced and intermediate learners seem to prefer the method of asking speakers for clarification or repeating back what they said to get a better understanding.

According to item 14, 50% of advanced learners have used and like the strategy of making sensible guesses on the topic discussed while 43.3% of intermediate students prefer it and will be using the same method in future to enhance their listening skills. This is aligned with a study conducted by Mohd Salleh, May, Azmi, Hatta, Razali & Zawawi (2018) where their results found the highest mean score of students listening to teachers and classmates as a technique to enhance their listening abilities. It may be inferred that watching or guessing what the speakers are saying can aid in the development of the learners' listening abilities.

Besides that, the result in item 15 shows 40% of advanced students have never used the strategy of using their background knowledge to get the main idea in enhancing listening skills. However, 46.7% of intermediate students have used this strategy and will use it again in future because they feel it is useful and effective.

The findings in item 16 shows that 40% of advanced students have used and like the technique of watching speakers' gestures to figure out the meaning whereas 40% of intermediate students have used this technique and will use it again. In this technique, there's only 10% of advanced learners and 6.7% of intermediate learners that claim that this technique does not fit them. It can be concluded that the technique is effective for certain people depending on how they are using it.

Speaking Strategy Use

Strategies to Practice Speaking

Table 7

Strategies to Practice Speaking

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES TO PRACTICE SPEAKING (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
17. Practice saying new phrase.	6.7	46.7	26.7	20	6.7	36.7	30	26.7
18. Practice new grammatical structures in different situations to build my confidence level in using them.	10	26.7	26.7	36.7	16.7	43.3	30	10
19. Think about how a native speaker might say something and practice saying it that way.	10	36.7	20	33.3	16.7	30	20	33.3

The table above reveals participants' responses with regard to strategies to practice speaking which they may have or may not have employed in their life. Based on item 17, both advanced and intermediate groups responded positively in applying speaking new phrases strategy, majority of the participants have tried and would employ this strategy again in their conversation. In contrary, an even number of 6.7% for both groups of participants believe that this specific strategy is impractical to them.

Based on item 18, there seems to be a conflict of opinion in practicing new grammatical structures to build their speaking confidence among the two groups of participants. 36.7% of advanced group participants agreed that they have not implement this strategy but are interested to the idea of it, while intermediate group's response pointed differently with the lowest number of 10%. Conflicting to advanced group's response, intermediate group showed highest response to having attempted this strategy and shows positive remark to put into practice again.

The next item proves that 36.7% of advanced group's participants think about the way native speakers speak and replicate their way to utter as a strategy to practice speaking. On the other hand, 33.3% of both groups have yet to employ this strategy but are keen to implement it during their speaking.

In conclusion, for strategies to practice speaking, both advanced and intermediate participants showed a liking towards item 17 (Practice saying new phrases) which falls under

cognitive strategy. However, it is clear that advanced group preferred this strategy much more than the intermediate group of participants.

Strategies to Engage in Conversations

Table 8

Strategies to Engage in Conversation

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE IN COVERSACTIONS (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
20. Initiate conversations in English as often as possible.	10	30	26.7	33.3	23.3	36.7	20	20
21. Direct the conversation to familiar topics.	3.3	40	16.7	40	20	30	33.3	16.7
22. Plan out in advance what I want to say.	13.3	26.7	36.7	23.3	0	43.3	53.3	3.3
23. Ask questions as a way to be involved in the conversation.	6.7	36.7	26.7	30	23.3	36.7	23.3	16.7
24. Anticipate what will be said based on what has been said so far.	13.2	36.7	16.7	33.3	13.3	50	16.7	20
25. Try topics even when they aren't familiar to me.	33.3	16.7	3.3	46.7	36.7	33.3	0	30
26. Encourage others to correct errors in my speaking	0	40	26.7	33.3	6.7	40	40	13.3

The table above demonstrates participants' responses with regard to strategies to engage in a conversation which they may have or may not have employed. The majority of the advanced learners, i.e., 63.3%, are rather keen on initiating a conversation in the target language though

most of them, i.e., 33.3%, have never employed such a strategy. Only 10% of them see the strategy as not practical to be employed. Meanwhile, 36.7% of the intermediate group participants have tried the strategy and are open to using it again. This indicates that both groups of participants are rather keen on using this strategy as part of their speaking strategies.

In terms of directing the conversation into a familiar topic, 40% of the advanced participants are open to using the strategy despite not having used it before and another 40% have occasionally used it and are willing to employ it again. Contrarily however, the intermediate group's response pointed in another direction proving that this is a strategy that they commonly use and thoroughly enjoy with 33.3% of them admitting that this is the strategy they use and like. The major difference here is, for the advanced learners this strategy is not as familiar as it is for the majority of the intermediate learners.

Unanimous agreement is shown by both the advanced and intermediate learners in terms of planning what they would like to say in advance with 36.7% of the advanced learners and 53.3% of the intermediate learners picking option 3. Also, it is noteworthy that very few participants from both groups of learners, i.e., 13.3%, are against this strategy and this is especially true for the intermediate group as none of the participants selected option 1 for this strategy.

Similar to Item 22, Item 23 also indicates unanimous agreement among the participants from both groups as the highest percentage recorded, 36.7% for each group respectively, shows that they have employed this strategy before and would continue doing so. For the advanced learners, only 6.7% find this strategy impractical but the same cannot be said for the intermediate group since 23.3% of them selected option 1. Although the majority of the intermediate learners have a positive outlook towards this strategy, if a comparison were to be made to the advanced group, a more positive view can be seen coming from the advanced learners which proves that they favour asking questions so that they could be involved in the conversation.

50% participants from the intermediate group vouched that they anticipate what will be said based on the things that have been said so far in the conversation and they would keep using the same strategy in the future. This item shows a clear majority within the intermediate group. Although the highest percentage recorded in the advanced learners' responses, 36.7%, showed a similar view, almost the same percentage, 33.3% was recorded for option 4 which indicates that a lot of them have not employed this strategy before. Nevertheless, both groups demonstrated a very positive outlook towards this particular strategy.

The next item focuses on learners' strategy of trying out unfamiliar topics. 33.3% of the advanced participants and 36.7% of the intermediate participants are rather reluctant to use this strategy which they deem unsuitable for them. However, a larger majority of the advanced learners, i.e., 46.7%, are keen on giving this strategy a try despite the fact that they have not used it before. From the learners' responses, it is rather clear that this strategy is not commonly used and this could be due to the fact that learners want to be a large part of the conversation when it takes place and not being familiar with the topic will only stunt their ability to participate in the discussion.

With regard to encouraging others to correct their errors, both groups demonstrated extremely positive perception. 40% participants from each respective group admitted to having tried it before and are open to employing it again. A higher percentage, i.e., 33.3%, of the advanced learners admitted that they have not tried this strategy but are willing to give it

a try compared to the intermediate group which recorded only 13.3%. Interestingly, none of the advanced learners are against this strategy.

All in all, for strategies to engage in conversation, both the advanced and intermediate learners showed a liking towards Item 22 (planning in advance what I want to say) which falls under metacognitive strategy. This result is utterly against the findings gathered in a study done by Emaliana (2017) in a university in East Java, Indonesia in which participants showed more negative attitude in preparing what to say in English mentally before speaking. However, if a comparison were to be made, it can be seen that the intermediate group, i.e., 53.3%, preferred this method much more than the advanced group, i.e., 36.7%.

Strategies for When I Can't Think of A Word or Expression

Table 9

Strategies for when I Can't Think of a Word or Expression

ITEM NO.	STRATEGIES FOR WHEN I CAN'T THINK OF A WORD OR EXPRESSION (%)							
	ADVANCED				INTERMEDIATE			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
27. Ask the person I'm talking with to help me out	0	30	46.7	23.3	13.3	43.3	33.3	10
28. Look for a different way to express the idea, like using a synonym	3.3	30	60	6.7	3.3	40	33.3	23.3
29. Use words from my own language, but say it in a way that sounds like words in English.	23.3	23.3	23.3	30	6.7	36.7	33.3	23.3
30. Use gestures as a way to try and get my meaning across.	3.3	46.7	23.3	16.7	6.7	53.3	26.7	13.3
31. Switch back to my own language momentarily if I know that the person, I'm talking to can understand what is being said.	3.3	23.3	63.3	10	3.3	26.7	50	20

The table above demonstrates advanced and intermediate group's responses toward strategies they face when they could not think of a word or an expression. Majority of the advanced participants with 46.7% like and are willing to the strategy to seek help from the person they are talking to when they face problem for words and expression, while none of the advanced participants are against the practicality of this strategy. In the meantime, intermediate group's response is highest with 43.3% at attempted this strategy and are willing to practice it as part of their speaking strategies.

Based on item 28, 60% of advanced learners implement and favour the practice to search for different ways of expression including the usage of synonym as a speaking strategy. This goes along with Sodiqova (2021) who mentioned extending ideas that include various ways to express an idea contributes to useful language speaking strategy. Conversely, 40% of the intermediate learners have only attempted this strategy but welcome the idea to practice it again. Unanimous agreement of 3.3% by both group of respondents showed that respondents believe that this strategy does not fit them.

The next item indicates that advanced group of respondents chose option 4 the most with 30% for the strategy to make words sound in English using their own language, while option 1,2 and 3 of advanced group stand still at 23.3%. However, intermediate respondents chose option 3 the most with 36.7%, indicating that they have implemented the strategy to jumble words from their own language to make it sound English before and favour it. Nevertheless, both groups revealed a positive stance towards this strategy.

Item 30 focuses on applying gestures as a medium to get meaning across a conversation. 56.7% of advanced group respondents while 53.3% of intermediate group's respondents showed an encouraging remark towards having experience and the intention to implement this particular strategy again in the future. It is clear that all respondents practice this strategy a lot in as a mean of expression.

The last item showed undivided agreement of implementing and favouring the strategy to switch between own language and targeted language between both group of respondents. Both groups chose option 3 the most with 63.3% from advanced group while 50% from intermediate group's respondents, while option 1 scored the least with 3.3.% for both groups of respondents.

In conclusion, for strategies when they can't think of a word or an expression, participants showed a liking towards item 28 (Look or a different way to express the idea, like using synonym) which falls under compensation strategy. However, it is clear that participants from advanced group preferred this strategy much more than the intermediate group of participants.

Implication and Conclusion

Listening and speaking is essential as it is considered as the first step in learning a language. Using different strategies to enhance listening and speaking skills will help the learners to increase their development to acquire the language. The aim of this paper is to investigate the listening and speaking strategies employed by intermediate as well as advanced ESL learners. The researcher has used Language Strategy Use Survey by Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2002) as a tool to collect data from the selected participants of this study. The goal of this assessment created by Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2002) is to help the participants understand more about themselves as a language student and to identify techniques for mastering a new language. The strategies are not defined by agreeing or disagreeing but it looks at the aspects

whether the participants like it, have used it, will use it again, are interested in it or think that the strategies do not fit them.

This study explored the utilisation of several strategies in increasing the participants' listening and speaking abilities based on their varied levels of proficiency. The findings of the study shows that participants have mostly used the strategies listed in the survey and it has helped them to develop their listening and speaking skills in learning language; however, the comparison of only advanced and intermediate learners is seen as a limitation of this study. Future study suggests that low-proficiency learners be included as participants to share the techniques used to enhance their listening and speaking skills as well as to gain a new idea of approaches that may be employed to improve skills.

The findings gathered in this study has proven that ESL learners of two different levels of proficiency namely intermediate and advanced are not tremendously different from each other in terms of their preferred language learning strategies. It is distinctively clear that there are other factors that can be considered as main contributors in ESL learners' choice of language learning strategies instead of their proficiency. Thus, the findings gathered in this study could serve as an additional support of the idea that ESL learners' level of proficiency does not necessarily influence their choice of language learning strategies. This indicates that future research should focus on other possible factors that may act as a stimulus in ESL learners' choice of language learning strategies.

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