

## Examining Language Learning Strategies (LLS) Through the Lens of Gen Alpha ESL Learners

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### Abstract

The ability to communicate with others in English is pivotal in this digital era, thus it is only natural to expect the digital natives like Generation Alpha to have proper English skills as it is a common language used in technology and communication. While numerous studies had been conducted to identify the preferred language learning strategies (LLS) by the English as Second Language (ESL) students, there is a paucity of studies on the LLS used by Generation Alpha, thus this study aims to shed some lights to the teachers on how they can offer assistance for their learners so that they can autonomously choose the best method that can help them refine their speaking skill. 50 primary students aged nine to twelve were selected using a purposive sampling method; they are all good language learners. The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was adapted and modified to assess the frequency of use of LLS. The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that metacognitive and social strategies are the most dominant LLS used by Generation Alpha while affective strategy was the least used by them in enhancing their speaking skill. Future studies should consider finding the correlation between the use of digital tools and Generation Alpha's preferred LLS as digitalisation has apparently shifted the education paradigm. It is imperative that teachers are provided with clearer apprehension on how they can develop more effective teaching strategies for Generation Alpha based on the LLS that the pupils are gravitated to.

**Keywords:** Digital Natives, English as Second Language (ESL), Generation Alpha, Language Learning Strategies (LLS), Speaking Skill

### Introduction

As the world turns more digitally day by day in this age, it is becoming paramount for learners to possess good English language knowledge, as this lingua franca is currently also the language of technology and communication (Maqbool et al., 2020). Inevitably, learners that can assimilate and accommodate to the said language will be the most advantageous as they are able to explore more. This fact has urged more researchers and educators to figure out the proper methods to create successful language learners Nair et al (2021), thus enabling

the pupils to adapt to the world of rapid technological advancement. Since learners learn in various approaches, language learning strategies (LLS) essentially help pupils maximise their learning skill and comprehension level (Oxford, 1990). Oxford (1990) also believed that when learners are responsible for their own learning by utilising the methods autonomously, this could promote lifelong learning, which is crucial for their communication competency development. This statement was further proven by the study made by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) which indicated that good language learners are well aware of the strategies that they employ while the learning process takes part and how those approaches foster their understanding of the language learned.

However, LLS is not one size fits all as a classroom is usually accommodated by students with mixed ability and it is important for educators to realise that varied learners equate to varied approaches (Oxford, 2003) and equip the students with proper strategies in hope those can be the catalyst to a more positive outcome. In correlation to this notion, it can also be concluded that students that are born in different generations carry different traits, resulting in different preferred LLS, which attribute could be influenced by the factors in their environment and exposure (Maqbool et al., 2020). Various studies had been conducted on previous generations (Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z).

Nonetheless, in Malaysia, research focusing on the English language learning strategies that are commonly utilised by Generation Alpha is still scarce, especially on speaking skill. Understanding the suitable methods by looking through the lenses of the successful language learners of this generation will offer a great insight to educationalists and policy makers as they can implement the ideal teaching strategies and tools that can be used while at the same time keeping in mind the preferred needs of this generation. Furthermore, speaking skill and communicative development are essential in this era and a concerted effort should be taken in ensuring the teaching approaches can appeal to the students' learning styles (Nor et al., 2019). Since English is spoken widely across the globe, it will be useful for the learners to be able to master the language and use it comfortably and fluently (Rao, 2019). Due to its significance, research is needed to identify the methods that the pupils, particularly ESL learners of Generation Alpha, use to enhance their English language proficiency. Thus, the objective of the study is to

1. Investigate the most used language learning strategies by Generation Alpha in improving their speaking skill
2. Investigate the least used language learning strategies by Generation Alpha in improving their speaking skill

## **Literature Review**

### **Language Learning Strategies (LLS)**

As learning languages becomes more important around the world, it becomes more important to understand language learning strategies (LLS). This is because LLS help learners to improve their language skills. LLS are the conscious or unconscious activities and ways of behaving that individuals engage through a variety of methods geared toward enhancing linguistic competence (Oxford, 1990). According to Buyuon, Hashim & Yunos (2019), "no one is naturally talented or capable of doing anything without first learning it." A person may use one or more ways to learn something in order to accomplish the desired outcome, such as the use of mnemonic devices to memorise vocabulary, practising with non-native speakers, practising with LLS, and getting feedback from teachers or peers (Teng & Zhang, 2019).

The most popular taxonomies for LLS were developed by (Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Norlund & Wedin, 2019; Ernomo, 2018). Oxford's (1990) taxonomy is well-known for providing a comprehensive, systematic, and more understandable overview of LLS that is consistent with students' and teachers' demands. Oxford (1990) has classified the strategies into two categories which are direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are, memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies that are specifically involved in understanding the target language. Meanwhile, Chanderan & Hashim (2022), stated that indirect strategies are affective strategy, metacognitive strategy and social strategy.

Besides, according to past literatures, there are factors affecting LLS. LLS can be seen from very different angles and according to Teng and Zhang (2019), attitude, motivation, age, sex, learning styles, and capabilities are all main factors that affect every person's LLS. Additionally, Attapol (2010) believes that the types of numbers, and frequency of purpose of LLS, do influence respondents' language learning. Due to this, a tool that is used to examine an individual's use of several strategies for learning a language, referred as Strategy Inventory of Language Learning, known as SILL was developed by Rebacca Oxford in 1990 (Hashim & Darrel, 2021). Since then, it has contributed better understanding for both researchers and teachers in evaluating the students' methods in learning language autonomously. SILL comprises of a five-point Likert-scale responses and made up of fifty questions that are designed to determine how frequently different types of coping strategies are used, especially by good learners. Therefore, this data will likewise give the language teachers a superior comprehension of how to work with their language to learn language more effectively.

In short, LLS are recognized as being essential for successful language acquisition and have the potential to assist respondents in becoming more productive and successful in their efforts to acquire a language. It is also clear that SILL plays a big role in giving information that language teachers need on how their learners are learning language. According to Hapsari (2019), teachers will know how to facilitate the respondents' language learning and ensure they learn the language more successfully and meaningfully.

### **Good Language Learners**

Learning a second language is one of the most significant and difficult undertakings that many individuals will have to do. People who successfully acquire a language by using effective language learning practices are considered to be good language learners (Lombardi et al., 2021). Students can improve their language learning effectiveness by being aware of what makes a successful language learner. Therefore, understanding the traits of a successful language learner is what first sparked interest in language learning techniques. Moreover, according to Nahar et al (2021), the 21st century learning paradigm of education calls for the teachers to shift from conventional teaching and learning methods in favour of ones that place a stronger focus on the active learning among the learners. Being able to draw students to the learning process is one of the benefits of active learning. Active learning is often cited by academics as a strategy for raising student involvement in their own learning. Wibowo et al (2020) defined the term "active learning" as a learning process where students actively engage, contribute ideas, solve issues, deepen their knowledge of concepts, and hone their abilities by completing tasks and activities assigned by teachers in the classroom. Hence, engagement, which is sometimes referred to as "the holy grail of learning," is associated with successful learning outcomes, as it makes pupils more focused, enthusiastic, and self-reliant (Lombardi et al., 2021).

Besides, technology use has grown to be a critical component of learning both inside and outside of the classroom. The language learners may customise their language learning experience based on their own strengths and limitations and get the best outcomes by employing technology tools. With rich online resources, technology provides students a plethora of options for autonomous learning (Yu, 2022). Numerous studies have shown that encouraging student autonomy in the classroom is crucial (Cheng, 2019; Melvina & Suherdi, 2019). Hence, promoting autonomous learning through technology among the Gen Alpha will make them evaluate their learning critically and comprehend what they need to do to excel successfully.

### **Gen Alpha as Digital Natives**

The generation known as Gen Alpha is said to have been born between the years of 2010 and 2025. Gen Alpha is called after the first letter of the Greek alphabet, Alpha, and was first used by generational researcher Mark McCrindle in 2008. In the succession of naming generations, Generation Z's immediate predecessors signal the end of the Latin alphabet, allowing the Gen Alpha to take its place. Additionally, they are referred to as the Net Generation, the Onliners, the Global Generation, Generation Tech, Technos, and Generation Surf (Selvi, 2022). This is also the young generation that will soon occupy the classrooms and institutions and who will want distinctive methods to teaching and learning that are based on their particular skill sets and needs (Ziatdinov & Cilliers, 2022).

Amrit (2020) believed that Generation Alpha can successfully incorporate technology into their daily life as they were born into a world where advanced technology is quickly functioning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, and it means the world to them. In the year of their birth (2010), the world's most popular brand, the iPad, and the social media platform Instagram, respectively, both launched. In addition, they will engage with their smartphone and tablet screens at home, as well as the increasingly "connected" classrooms and interactive displays, by swiping, scrolling, and chatting to them, according to (Moule, 2022). Hence, this generation will be heavily influenced by app-based play, greater screen time, shorter attention spans, lack of social formation due to too much exposure to technology and information, as well as the ease of access to it (McCrindle & Fell, 2020). This demonstrates that technology and adoption have altered their upbringing (McCrindle, 2021).

Many studies have revealed that Gen Alpha is more curious, inventive and independent than Gen Z (Apaydin & Kaya, 2020). This technology boom further has a positive impact on the attitude of this alpha generation because Chitra (2020) has proven that a better environment will provide better output. They can multitask and think creatively in addition to having a large communication network. This is consistent with the assertion made by Selvi et al in 2022, who claims that in addition to being ambitious, self-starters, and entrepreneurs, the alpha generation is also autonomous, resilient, and aware that success requires a lot of effort. This is due to the fact that this generation has grown up around different forms of digital technology, which has an impact on cognitive function and identity formation (Carvalho et al, 2022). Because this generation is being formed in an education system that emphasizes goal setting and giving students access to technology at home and at school, they are able to develop and investigate areas outside the classroom. Additionally, they are given time for introspection to foster the development of various intelligences rather than simply numeracy and literacy, which emphasises reading, writing, and counting (McCrindle, 2021).

### **Speaking skill in Language Learning**

Apart from learning language to enable learners to adapt in this world of technology, it is also becoming increasingly vital for them to be able to interact with others globally. Since the dominant purpose of learning a particular language is to develop the ability to communicate with others, it becomes a prerequisite skill for learners to build solid speaking skill, which also encompasses great communicative skills. According to Kehing et al (2021), in sharing ideas and providing input through communication, good speaking skill shapes a good English communicator, which can be perceived as a good language learner. Furthermore, having good fluency in speaking, which connotes learners' ability to use the target language smoothly and assertively, is also another trait of a proficient speaker (Yahaya et al., 2021). When the speaker expresses his ideas without constant hesitation and superfluous pauses, this can be associated with fluency (British Council, 2021).

Nonetheless, in Malaysia, very little emphasis is put on oral skills as both teachers and students are inclined to focus on writing tests, a negligence driven by academic purpose and culture in the country (Zakaria et al., 2019). This is further supported by John et al. (2021), highlighting that some students do not have adequate opportunities to speak in English, especially in the classroom. Oral skill is already difficult to master but when the teachers do not use the limited time in the classroom to encourage students to actively engage verbally, this will impede the aforementioned skill, especially when teachers keep on monopolising the lesson, incessantly talking and explaining things, depriving the students of opportunities to brush up their skills, according to (Zakaria et al., 2019).

Therefore, by ensuring that their students have what it takes to develop the required skills for the target language, teachers may help their students improve their speaking abilities and fulfil the communicative achievement. When the teachers know which LLS to opt for their students, this will offer extra supports that are very much needed by the students, further encouraging them to speak in the target language and ensuring a promising way to master the language (Zakaria et al., 2019; Rubaai et al., 2019). The goal of learning English is to be able to use the language outside of the confines of formal education, so as the students learn how to choose their preferred method of learning, they will be more motivated to do so.

Empirical studies on the relationship between anxiety, shyness, LLS, speaking skill and academic achievement by Oflaz (2019) revealed that language anxiety negatively affected students' speaking skill and academic achievement. The result also showed that students who used more language learning strategies were able to overcome their anxiety, which also reflected better academic performance. Thus, this connotes that when students are equipped with proper strategies, this will stimulate their speaking ability and propel them towards good academic achievement. As the architects of the lessons, teachers should expose students with varied LLS as one of the ways to attain successful communication skills among students, especially in this age where students may have different learning preferences.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

For the purpose of this study, a survey design was used as the research design. In this study, Oxford (1990)'s Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (commonly known as SILL) was employed.

### Research Sample

50 sub-urban Generation Alpha successful language learners served as the study's respondents. They are students between the ages of 9 and 12 that comprises 30 females and 20 males.

Table 1

*Demographic profiles of the respondents*

No	Item		N (%)
1	Gender	Male	20 (40%)
		Female	30 (60%)
2	Race	Malay	43 (86%)
		Indian	1 (2%)
		Chinese	0 (0%)
		Others	6 (12%)
3	Age	9 years old	1 (2%)
		10 years old	11 (22%)
		11 years old	10 (20%)
		12 years old	28 (56%)
4	English Proficiency Level	Good	50 (100%)

### Data Collection Method

Purposive sampling was employed to guarantee that the sample held the traits of successful language learners, especially students with good speaking skill. A Google Form link to the SILL survey was made available to the respondents.

### Instrument

The research used Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 7.0 to gather data that was in line with the intended goals. This set of questionnaires is advocated by Habók and Magyar (2018) by asserting that this tool is appropriate for use as a taxonomy to evaluate the method being used by ESL learners. In order to facilitate comprehension and avoid any misunderstandings, the questionnaires were also translated into the participants' first language, which is the Malay language.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections, namely the demographic of the respondents and SILL. The SILL was divided into 6 parts which are Part C (Compensation Strategy), Part D (Cognitive Strategy), Part E (Metacognitive Strategy), Part F (Memory Strategy), Part G (Affective Strategy) and Part H (Social Strategy).



Table 2

*Description for each part of the Questionnaire*

Part	Descriptions
Part A: Question 1 - 6	Demographic Profile of the Respondents
Part B: Question 1 - 9	Social Media Usage
Part C: Question 1 - 5	Compensation Strategy
Part D: Question 1 - 5	Cognitive Strategy
Part E: Question 1 - 5	Metacognitive Strategy
Part F: Question 1 - 5	Memory Strategy
Part G: Question 1 - 5	Affective Strategy
Part H: Question 1 - 5	Social Strategy

All the statements were rated on a Likert scale of 1-5, to indicate the degree of frequency utilised by the participants based on their experience with the LLS. Each number of the Likert scale was defined as follows: The total of items from Part B to Part H is 39 items with a 5-point Likert Scale. The Likert scale used in these 39 items goes from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The respondents assessed their own performance using this tool and thought back on how much they had used various language techniques during their ESL learning process.

Table 3

*Likert Scale Description for Each Language Learning Strategy*

Scale	Descriptions
1	Never
2	Rarely
3	Sometimes
4	Often
5	Always

### Data Collection Procedure

Using a set of questionnaires, the study was conducted quantitatively. The questionnaires were administered to all the 50 respondents via Google Form through WhatsApp. Using this instrument, the respondents evaluated their own performance and considered how much they had employed different language strategies during their ESL learning journey.

### Data Analysis

A descriptive research was conducted to determine the most and least popular language learning methods among Generation Alpha ESL learners. First, the mean of each technique in the strategy was computed, then the overall mean of each approach was then determined. Analysis was done on the most and least popular technique utilised in each

strategy. Prior to interpretation, the most and least common strategies utilised by the individuals were also contrasted and examined.

### Findings

This part represents the outcome of this study and discusses the findings. Tables are used in order to show the summary of the findings of the data gathered and further discuss the six language learning strategies used by Generation Alpha to increase their speaking skill.

Table 4 summarises the average mean value and the ranks of the LLS used by Generation Alpha based on the most and least preferred strategies that have been applied. Based on Table 4, the most frequently used LLS by the respondents are the metacognitive strategy with the highest average mean (M=10.00) and social strategy (M=10.00), followed by compensation strategy (M=9.92), memory strategy (M=9.68), cognitive strategy (M=9.64) and lastly, the least average mean (M=9.20) is the affective strategy.

Table 4

*Average Mean Score for Each Language Learning Strategy*

Language Learning Strategies	Mean	Rank
Metacognitive	10.00	1
Social	10.00	
Compensation	9.92	2
Memory	9.68	3
Cognitive	9.64	4
Affective	9.20	5

### **RQ 1: What are the most used language learning strategies by the Gen Alpha ESL learners in improving their speaking skill?**

Below, Table 5 shows the items and mean scores for one of the most applied strategy among the respondents, which is metacognitive strategy. The metacognitive part includes 5 statements which are: 1) "I pay attention when someone is speaking English" (M=10), 2) "I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better" (M=10), 3) "I try to find out how to be a better learner of English" (M=10), 4) "I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English" (M=10) and lastly 5) "I think about my progress in learning English" (M=10).



Table 5

*Mean Score for Metacognitive Language Learning Strategy*

No	Item	Standard deviation	Mean
1	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	8.276472679	10
2	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better	7.810249676	10
3	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English	9.110433579	10
4	I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English	7.874007874	10
5	I think about my progress in learning English	8.717797887	10

Apart from that, based on the ranking of the average mean score previously shown in Table 4, the findings show that another strategy that is most used by the respondents is social strategy, as demonstrated in Table 6 below. The questionnaire for social part includes 5 statements which are: 1) "I ask for help from people who can speak in English fluently" (M=10), 2) "I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk" (M=10), 3) "I practise English with other students" (M=10), 4) "If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again" (M=10), 5) "I ask questions in English" (M=10)

Table 6

*Mean Score for Social Language Learning Strategy*

No	Item	Standard deviation	Mean
1	I ask for help from people who can speak in English fluently (English speakers)	6.123724357	10
2	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk	5.14781507	10
3	I practise English with other students	3.16227766	10
4	If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again	6.442049363	10
5	I ask questions in English	4.301162634	10

RQ 2. What are the least used language learning strategies by Gen Alpha in improving their speaking skill?

Based on the findings, it is revealed that the least used LLS by the respondents is affective strategy, which is then summarized in Table 7. The affective part includes 5 statements, the lowest mean is statement number 2, which is "I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English" (M= 8.90), followed by "I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English" (M=9.05), "I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake" (M=9.19), "I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English" (M = 9.25) and finally, "I post my feelings towards language on social media like Instagram or Twitter" (M=9.60)

Table 7  
*Mean Score for Affective Language Learning Strategy*

No	Item	Standard deviation	Mean
1	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English	5.477225575	9.25
2	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English	3.391164992	8.90
3	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake	5.14781507	9.19
4	I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English	4.301162634	9.05
5	I post my feelings towards language on social media like Instagram or Twitter	7.615773106	9.60

## Discussion

Based on the study and data analysis, the researchers discovered that the students employed a variety of strategies including memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy, metacognitive strategy, affective strategy and social strategy when learning English as a second language. However, the participants of this study, who particularly belong to Generation Alpha, seem to favour metacognitive and social strategies the most (M=10 and M=10, respectively) while the majority employ affective strategy the least (M=9.20).

As metacognitive strategy is highly influenced by self-monitoring process, this indicates that the learners that highly utilise this approach are in control of their personal language learning process and able to independently reflect and manage their learning process (Yang & Bai, 2019). This type of independent learner is also known as autonomous learner, which is in line with Cambridge (2021) as he described learner autonomy as the ability to direct your own, autonomous learning. Being the product of 21<sup>st</sup> century education, it is no doubt that Gen Alpha is very familiar with the habit of autonomous learning. This consequently moulds them to be in charge of their own learning, clearly understanding what actions should be taken for them to overcome the hindrances while they try to master the English language. Based on the statements in the questionnaire, "I ask for help from people who can speak in English fluently", "I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk", and "If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again," these clearly demonstrate the traits of an autonomous learner. A research by Julians (2021) found a strong connection between autonomous learning and metacognitive strategy. She claims that the key factor in an autonomous student's achievement is metacognition. According to Zhuodan & Jiani (2020), autonomous learning enables students to promptly and proactively modify their learning techniques and coping mechanisms in response to the consequences of their learning. This opinion is supported by Hosid (2021), who studies the learning design of Generation Alpha. He argued that the Universal Design for Learning framework (UDL) framework for the Alpha Generation provides flexibility so that students can choose their own learning path.

Not only that, the findings also uncover the influence of 21<sup>st</sup> century collaborative learning towards the language learning strategy of Generation Alpha. The results manifest that the respondents generally have a positive perception towards social strategy in comparison to a study made on a different generation of Asian learners more than a decade ago. Since this current study is conducted in Malaysia, which has recently and widely adopted collaborative learning in schools, it demonstrates how the curriculum has impacted the

students. Before this, a few past studies revealed that Asian learners were perceived as reserved and passive in a classroom setting, which was influenced by their culture that deems asking questions as impolite and disrespectful towards the speaker; the teacher, and would cause disturbance to other people; their classmates (Teh et al., 2013; Bremner, 1999; Lin & Yi, 1997; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985). Since social strategy requires students to ask questions, it did not come naturally to these Asian students even if they went to study abroad and were exposed to a completely different learning culture (Lin & Yi, 1997). However, parallel with the current education reformation, Malaysian education system has broadly enforced collaborative and communicative approaches in the classroom, especially when it comes to language learning. Students are now encouraged to carry out group discussion, stimulated to ask questions to demonstrate understanding and prompted to inquire for assistance when necessary. Plus, with the utilisation of digital tools and social media, the students do not necessarily have to engage with their friends physically, that even shy students would feel comfortable to approach their teachers and friends (Ansari & Khan, 2020). Consequently, this would mediate the relationships among learners and improve their learning performance (Chan et al., 2019). Thus, it is not surprising when Generation Alpha of this study is highly in favour of “I ask for help from people who can speak in English fluently”, “I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk” and “I practise English with other students”. They are not shy to interact with others when it comes to improving their speaking skill.

Findings also demonstrate that affective strategy is the least utilised. This finding is in line with the study (Aziz & Shah, 2020; Citra & Zainil, 2021) which says that this strategy is the least used by students in language learning. For this study in particular, the statement “I post my feelings towards language on social media like Instagram or Twitter” was included in the questionnaire and it was found that the respondents rarely or never use this approach. Because they were raised in a technologically advanced society, this generation rarely communicates physically or face-to-face (Ramadhani and Wibisono, 2017). They have shorter physical interactions as a result of spending too much time in front of the screen, which makes them less likely to express their feelings in public. They have higher self-esteem and are more aware of the risks associated with posting private information on social media, among other reasons why they don't express their emotions on these platforms. This is consistent with the findings of Apaydin & Kaya (2020), who found that Generation Alpha is more consciously aware compared to Generation Z. Furthermore, the respondents also uniformly opted “I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English” as the least used technique. A similar result was revealed in a study conducted by Lestari & Wahyudin (2020) and they inferred that students no longer find the need to foster affective strategy as they do not have problems in regard to this. Similar implication can be made on Generation Alpha for the aforementioned reasons; they have higher self-esteem and awareness, all due to abundant digital information that they have been exposed to since young (Apaydin & Kaya, 2020). In fact, when they were born, English was already the language of technology and communication, thus the gadgets and social media that they use daily are constantly feeding them with various English terms and vocabularies. Being a digital native, where they easily have access to various types of English speakers, they simply don't find their progress as reward-worthy.

## **Conclusion**

As Generation Alpha will soon dominate the percentage of students in schools and institutions, it is essential for teachers to have clear ideas on how they can help this generation to navigate their ways in the digital and globalised world. As teachers have the

upper hand in designing the lessons in the classroom, the findings from this study hopefully shed some light for the teachers on the most and least preferred language learning strategies used by Generation Alpha. This is due to its pertinence in developing and expanding students' competency in the target language, especially for their communicative performances. Thus, the time has come for teachers to review their teaching approaches and tools used in the classroom, whether it is suitable in bolstering Generation Alpha's preferred approach or vice versa.

Based on the discussion above, it can also be concluded that the students are able to self-evaluate their own learning and figure out the solutions to improve their proficiency as one of the most selected strategies is metacognitive strategy. Despite being 12 years old and below, the respondents are already aware of their learning strategies and how these affect their speaking ability. The reason why this generation is metacognitive driven, is probably because of their refined awareness and higher self-esteem. In the same vein, the respondents also foster the social cognitive approach; a habit developed from constant collaborative and communicative learning in the 21st century classroom. Nonetheless, albeit many previous studies stressed on the importance of affective strategy, this generation somehow shows very little inclination towards it, could be because they simply do not find expressing their feeling necessary or because they do not find their progress commendable and praiseworthy. Thus, the educators of this generation should try to apply these strategies in the classroom and see how it will affect their language learning development since this current study was executed on good language learners and the results derived holds a promising direction for their peers.

From the findings, it is recommended for future research to find the correlation between the use of digital tools among the digital natives like Generation Alpha and the impact on their opted LLS. This is because, the average mean for affective strategy was relatively low, yet the opposite case is for social strategy. This pervasiveness could be contributed by the impact of rapidly advancing technology during their years of growth, which has also steered the paradigm of our education system. In addition to this, the overview presented in this study can also be extended to further identify the LLS used in other skills, namely, reading, writing and listening. Besides, more in-depth research can be done by comparing between two generations and analyse how the LLS used affect their performance. Hopefully, the results would be more comprehensive to explore the most effective teaching strategies that could further aid their abilities and enhance their English competence.

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