Dilla Journal of Education
https://www.du.edu.et/duj

Language Learning Strategy Use of Dilla University English Major Students

Belilew Molla Gebre*

* Department of English Language and Literature, Dilla University, Ethiopia

Received: 15 June 2022 Accepted: 15 September 2022 Published: 02 October 2022

ARTICLE INFO.

Key words/phrases: Average and low achievers, Frequency of strategy use, High, Language learning strategy

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to investigate the language learning strategies employed by English major students at Dilla University. The participants of the study were thirty second-year students enrolled in the program. A descriptive research design was adopted. Data were collected using Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) alongside interviews. While the questionnaire data were analyzed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20, interview responses were examined qualitatively. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, together with inferential methods such as one-way ANOVA and post hoc tests, were used to determine whether significant differences existed in learners' strategy use. The findings revealed that students with higher achievement levels employed a broader range of language learning strategies and used them more frequently than both average- and low-achieving learners. Moreover, the results confirmed that a statistically significant mean difference existed among the three groups in their application of learning strategies.

1 Introduction

Effective learning strategies are widely recognized as essential tools in the acquisition of a second or foreign language (L2) (Griffiths, 2013; Oxford, 2017). In the modern world, shaped by rapid technological advancement and globalization, English has emerged as a vital medium of communication. It is extensively used for accessing information, exchanging ideas, and establishing networks, and it is taught as a second or foreign language at all levels of education in many countries worldwide.

Previous research has shown that learning strategies play a key role in assisting learners to acquire English both within and beyond the classroom setting (Khamkhien, 2011; Oxford, 2011). Several studies have sought to identify the strategies most and least frequently employed by L2 learners (Foster *et al.*, 2017; Phonhan, 2016; Rardprakhon, 2016). Generally, learners adopt a range of strategies, and the use of language learning strategies (LLS) has been reported as common among students (Habok & Magyar, 2018). Moreover, high-achieving learners are often more engaged in LLS, apply a greater variety of methods, and make more appropriate choices than their lower-achieving peers (Al-Qahtani, 2013; Habok & Magyar, 2018; Rao, 2016). However, other research found no significant relationship between proficiency level and strategy use (Phonhan, 2016; Rardprakhon, 2017).

Investigations have also been conducted to identify the most frequently used types of learning strategies. Some studies reported that EFL learners tended to rely more on cognitive strategies compared to memory-based ones (Al-Qahtani, 2013; Charoento, 2017; Bonyadi *et al.*, 2012; Khamkhien, 2011;

* Author's Email: belilew67@gmail.com;
Article DOI:10.20372/dje.v01i02.01

Kunasaraphan, 2015; Srisupha, 2012; Tieocharoen & Rimkeeratikul, 2019). Others indicated that learners often employed social strategies more frequently than other categories (Suwanarak, 2015; Tieocharoen & Rimkeeratikul, 2019), whereas some studies suggested that social strategies were among the least used by EFL students (Foster *et al*., 2017; Ghavamnia *et al*., 2011; Phonhan, 2016). These differences suggest that strategy use varies considerably among individuals. In fact, earlier findings have associated LLS with multiple learner-related variables, including age, gender, and motivation.

In the Ethiopian context, the number of university students enrolled in English programs has been increasing compared to earlier years, largely due to the language's recognition both nationally and internationally in the labor market. Nevertheless, equity in English achievement and proficiency among these learners remains uncertain, raising concerns among educators and researchers. At Dilla University, for example, disparities are evident. In the 2020 academic year, 42 students were admitted into the first-degree program, but by 2021 this number had decreased to 30, as 12 students withdrew due to low performance. Furthermore, among the 30 remaining students, 24 had a GPA below 3.00. Such unsatisfactory outcomes in English language performance can be linked to several factors, including teaching methodology, teacher preparation, the quality of curricular materials, evaluation practices, limited professional development opportunities for teachers, and the attitudes of both teachers and learners (Cross, 1995).

In light of the foregoing factors, the purpose of this study was to describe the strategies employed by high-, average-, and low-achieving students at Dilla University in order to comprehend these students' special efforts in developing the target language.The study tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What language learning strategies do high-, average-, and low-achieving learners frequently use?
2. Is there a statistically significant mean difference among high, average, and low achievers in the language learning strategies they use?

2 Review of Related Literature

Language Learning Strategies

Over the past decades, a substantial number of studies have explored language learning strategies (LLS) (Griffiths, 2013; Griffiths & Cansiz, 2015; Habok & Magyar, 2018; Khamkhien, 2011; Macaro, 2006; Oxford, 2011; Wu, 2008). Findings from this body of research consistently show that LLS enhances students' language learning capacity and their proficiency in English. The choice of strategies, however, is influenced by multiple factors, such as learners' proficiency level, length of study, learning objectives, gender, personality traits, preferred learning styles, academic discipline, aptitude, instructional approaches, task requirements, nationality, learning environment, affective factors, and age.

The frequency and variety of strategies used have been linked to language proficiency. More proficient learners tend to employ a wider range of strategies compared to less proficient learners (Al-Qahtani, 2013; Gerami & Baighlou, 2011; Giang & Tuan, 2018; Habok & Magyar, 2018). They also use strategies more frequently (Foster *et al*., 2017; Gerami & Baighlou, 2011) and in more effective ways (Chen, 2009). However, some studies reported no direct connection between the use of LLS and proficiency level (Phonhan, 2016; Rardprakhon, 2016). While earlier studies suggested a positive association between language competence and strategy use, other findings pointed to an opposite trend (Chen, 2009; Gerami & Baighlou, 2011; Giang & Tuan, 2018; Habok & Magyar, 2018).

Recent research, however, strongly emphasizes the contribution of LLS to language proficiency (Al-Qahtani, 2013; Charoento, 2017; Rao, 2016; Wu, 2008). These studies generally conclude that proficient learners are more engaged in LLS, apply a broader range of strategies, and make more suitable choices than less proficient learners (Al-Qahtani, 2013; Habo, 2017). The selection and application of strategies are also influenced by the broader educational context, teaching materials, and cultural norms (Chamot, 2004; Oxford, 1989). For instance, in systems where competition is encouraged, learners may prefer individual strategies over

collaborative ones. Grainger (2012) also highlights that strategy choice is closely tied to cultural and situational contexts.

Educational systems and contexts therefore play a crucial role in shaping strategy use (Chamot, 2004; Grainger, 2012; Khamkhien, 2011). A study by Zhong (2015) followed two Chinese immigrant students and found that their strategies evolved as they encountered new instructional approaches in New Zealand. This research illustrates how learners' beliefs and strategies are interconnected and how exposure to new environments can bring about significant changes in their learning approaches. Similarly, other studies confirm that strategy preferences are socially mediated and context-dependent (Habok & Magyar, 2018; Hashim *et al*., 2018; Tieocharoen & Rimkeeratikul, 2019). These findings highlight the strong influence of learning environments and contexts on both the types and frequency of strategies employed.

Another influential factor is motivation. Students with higher motivation levels tend to use a greater variety of strategies more frequently than less motivated peers (Al-Qahtani, 2013). Motivation not only affects the frequency of use but also helps learners select strategies more effectively and align them with broader learning goals (Oxford, 1990). In other words, motivation plays a dual role by influencing both the quantity and quality of strategy use. Previous research has shown that motivation and LLS together enable learners to design strategic learning plans (Griffiths, 2013; Kunasaraphan, 2015; Macaro, 2006; Taguchi, 2002). Motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, also drives persistence and task completion (Griffiths, 2013).

For researchers and educators, understanding how students employ strategies is essential, as it provides deeper insights into the process of language acquisition and the practical use of LLS in developing proficiency, particularly within EFL learning contexts.

Oxford's Taxonomy

Oxford (1990), cited in Paredes (2010), proposed one of the most influential and comprehensive classifications of language learning strategies, which continues to be widely adopted in research and practice. Her taxonomy organizes strategies into two broad categories: direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are those that directly involve the use of the target language. These include memory strategies (such as grouping, imagery, and rhyming), cognitive strategies (such as practicing, analyzing, or summarizing), and compensation strategies (such as guessing meanings or using synonyms when vocabulary is limited).

Indirect strategies, on the other hand, support language learning without directly involving language use. These are classified into metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning), affective strategies (managing motivation, emotions, and attitudes), and social strategies (seeking interaction and practicing with others). This classification has become a cornerstone in the field because it is both comprehensive and practical, allowing teachers and researchers to understand how learners approach language learning from multiple perspectives (Oxford, 1990). Many subsequent studies have applied this taxonomy to examine learners' strategy use across various contexts and to explore relationships between strategy use, learner characteristics, and language achievement.

Direct Strategies

Direct learning strategies come in three different varieties: memory techniques, cognitive strategies, and compensatory strategies. Memory strategies help students connect ideas or things in their second language, but they may not always call for in-depth knowledge (Oxford, 2003, $p.13$). Students can learn and recall information in a logical order using a variety of memory-related techniques (e.g., acronyms), while other techniques help students, a learn and recall information by using sounds (e.g., rhyming), images (e.g., a mental image of the word itself or its meaning), a combination of sounds and images (e.g., the keyword method), body movement (e.g., total physical response), and mechanical means (e.g flashcard) (Oxford, 2003). The learner is able to immediately apply the linguistic material through taking notes, making arguments, and using other cognitive strategies.

Indirect Strategies

As was already said, Oxford's (1990) indirect learning strategies can be categorized under the social, emotional, and metacognitive categories. The management and facilitation of language acquisition typically do not directly involve the target language. Social strategies enhance interaction and increase empathy since they entail exchanges between and among people (Canale, 1983), as is described in Parades (2010). An example of a social strategy is asking the speaker to repeat themselves, paraphrase, talk more slowly, and so on. The emotional demands of the learner, such as the self-assurance and tenacity required for learners to actively engage in language learning, are the focus of affective approaches. For instance, laughing at one's own mistakes can help reduce fear (Vlckova *et al*., 2013).

Metacognitive strategies include all three of these aspects of the language learning process: planning, observing, and evaluating (Fewell, 2010). The opportunity to practice in-conversation skills in real-world situations is actively sought for or created by learners (for example, by joining a discussion group) (Paredes, 2010). Despite disagreements over the definition of LLS, these methods aid language learners in taking control of their education, enhancing their competency, and—most importantly—becoming autonomous (Vandergrift, 2002; Paredes, 2010).

According to Ellis (994), Oxford's SILL is regarded as the most thorough classification of LLS and has been extensively utilized for gathering data on numerous language learners throughout the world (Green & Oxford, 1995; Wharton, 2000; Hsiao & Oxford, 2002; Lan & Oxford, 2003). This instrument has been translated into other languages and is standardized. It was widely used by researchers to gather data on a sizable population of primarily foreign language learners, and it was also utilized in studies that correlated the usage of strategies with factors like gender, competence level, learning styles, culture, and length of language study (Green & Oxford, 1995; Wharton, 2000). Given that this research examines the impact of strategy on gender, academic year, and length of English study.

3 Methods

3.1 Research Design

The current study employed a descriptive case study research design. This is due to the fact that many problems in education are best examined by using this method. Moreover, it plays a significant role in the description, explanation, and interpretation of present situations, events, and trends, which are vital topics of interest.

Since it is a descriptive research design, a mixed approach was implemented. This is due to the fact that the combined use of quantitative and qualitative research methods provides an expanded understanding of research problems (Creswell, 2009). What's more, mixed methods are inclusive, pluralistic, complementary, and more convenient than quantitative or qualitative methods alone (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Accordingly, the current researcher preferred to employ such a sort of method, for he felt that the mixed approach provided a better grasp of the research problem.

3.2 Target Population and Sampling

This study, conducted at Dilla University, sought to investigate the strategies employed by high, average, and low achievers. Just like the setting, the subjects were purposefully selected by the researcher because the present investigator assumed that the students had better awareness of language learning strategies than freshmen at the university. The total population that took part in this study was thirty EFL students, based on a comprehensive sampling technique. All participants in this study were first-degree learners. High, average, and low achievers were identified among these participants based on their three semester cumulative results. Students who managed to score between 2 and 2.5 points in their English language learning were considered low achievers, and the students whose grade ranged from 2.5 to 3.00 points were called average achievers in this study. The high achievers are the ones who were able to achieve a 3.0 or higher GPA in their English language learning. The ages of these students ranged from 19 to 22 years old. Participants have nearly the same year of English learning experience. They studied English beginning in primary school and progressing

through tertiary school. All participants in this study neither entered language schools nor lived in English-speaking countries.

3.3 Data Gathering Instruments

Two research instruments were employed in this study to gain the required information from the respondents and assess their strategy use. These were a self-report questionnaire for ESL/EFL learners (SILL) and a semi-structured interview.

The self-report questionnaire (SILL)

In order to measure the strategy use of the target population, Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learners (SILL) was adopted for this study owing to the following important reasons: Firstly, this tool actually allows the collection of information on a variety of issues in a relatively short time that is both cost-effective and easy for analysis. Secondly, it allows comparisons of answers among respondents. Thirdly, this type of method reaches many more people. Moreover, SILL is "the most comprehensive instrument to date" (Ellis, 1994, p. 539); Oxford's classification is "more systematic in linking individual strategies as well as strategy groups" (Oxford, 1990, p. 14).

In the SILL, language learning strategies fall into six major categories: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social, in which they enable the assessment of EFL learning strategies. The items were created using five-point likert-scales (closed-ended), which reveal the frequency of use of learning strategies (as 1 = "Never True of Me"; 2 = "Usually Not True of Me"; 3 = "Somewhat True of Me"; 4 = "Usually True of Me"; 5 = "Always True of Me").

The internal consistency and reliability of the self-report questionnaire were checked. Cronbach's alphas for metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, memory strategies, social strategies, compensation strategies, and affective strategies were 0.85, 0.893, 0.761, 0.899, 0.725, and 0.633, respectively. This indicates that all items of individual strategies form a scale that has reasonable internal consistency and reliability for multiple-item scales.

Interview

A semi-structured interview was used in order to substantiate the information gained via the questionnaire. To obtain detailed information from subjects, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews. By the same token, it permits a free response. Since the purpose of this interview was to supplement the data collected through the self-report questionnaire, it was designed on the basis of the questionnaire. For this reason, the contents of the interview were almost identical to the contents of the questionnaire. Three students from each of the three groups, low, average, and high achievers, were purposefully chosen for the interview.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were entered into a computer and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The analysis was carried out for both individual items and the average scores of summated scales, categorized according to the performance levels of high-, average-, and low-achieving learners. The outcomes generated by SPSS were organized under the six major strategy groups—memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social—and were presented using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Within each of these main categories, students' preferences for individual items as well as for the overall scale were calculated using mean values. Based on this, the dominant strategies employed by high-, average-, and low-achievers were ranked. Means and percentages were then compared across the six major strategy groups to identify variations in strategy use among the three achievement levels. To test for significant differences in the strategies employed, a one-way ANOVA was conducted, with the level of significance set at $p < 0.05$. The analysis was interpreted in relation to the cumulative results of learners across three semesters.

It is important to note that a one-way ANOVA is an omnibus test, which means it can only indicate whether significant differences exist between groups but does not specify which groups differ. Therefore, post hoc tests were applied to determine the exact groups that showed statistically significant differences.

4 Results and Discussion

The major objective of the present study was to identify the frequency of language learning strategies that high-, average-, and low-achieving students use (Table 1). To this end, a self-report questionnaire and interview were used.

Table 1: Metacognitive Strategy use

Achievement		Metacogniti ve Strategy 1	MetaStrg 2	MetaStrg3	MetaStrg 4	MetaStrg 5	MetaStrg 6	MetaStrg 7	MetaStrg 8	MetaStrg 9	MetaStrg 10
Low	Mean	2.12	2.53	2.88	2.76	2.65	2.94	2.47	2.53	2.65	2.88
	SD	.781	1.281	1.269	1.348	1.222	1.298	1.281	1.231	.931	1.317
	Skewness	-.219	.432	.039	.658	.079	-.073	.378	-.077	.828	.057
	N	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
Medium	Mean	2.71	3.14	3.86	4.43	2.86	2.86	3.00	3.43	2.43	3.43
	SD	.951	1.464	1.215	.787	.900	1.464	1.000	1.272	1.813	.976
	Skewness	-.863	.109	-.414	-1.115	.353	-.109	-1.400	.222	.983	.277
	N	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
High	Mean	3.67	3.33	4.17	4.50	4.67	3.83	4.00	4.33	4.33	4.00
	SD	.816	1.211	1.169	.548	.516	.983	1.549	1.211	1.033	1.549
	Skewness	.857	.075	-1.586	.000	-.968	-1.438	-.968	-1.952	-.968	-1.936
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Total	Mean	2.57	2.83	3.37	3.50	3.10	3.10	2.90	3.10	2.93	3.23
	SD	1.006	1.315	1.326	1.383	1.296	1.296	1.373	1.398	1.363	1.331
	Skewness	.131	.231	-.262	-.335	-.096	-.299	.106	-.109	.391	-.272
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Items 1 to 10 were designed to examine how frequently high-, average-, and low-achieving students applied metacognitive strategies in addressing their challenges with English. For low achievers, the reported frequency ranged from 2.21 to 2.94. The least applied strategy was Item 1 ("If I cannot recall an English word, I substitute it with a word or phrase that carries the same meaning"), while Item 6 ("I try to explore as many opportunities as possible to use my English") was the most frequently practiced. Other strategies often used by this group included Item 2 (Table 1) with a mean of 2.53 ("When I cannot remember a word in conversation, I rely on gestures"), Item 8 with a mean of 3.00 ("I set clear objectives to improve my English skills"), and Item 10 with a mean of 2.88 ("I reflect on my progress in learning English").

Based on these results, low achievers can be classified as medium-level users of strategies. As Oxford (1990) suggests, such learners would benefit from targeted training to enhance their strategy application.

Among average achievers, the frequency of metacognitive strategy use ranged from 2.43 to 4.43. Their most preferred strategy was Item 4 with a mean score of 4.43 ("I try to discover how to be a more effective English learner"), while their least applied strategy was Item 8 with a mean of 2.43 ("I set clear goals for improving my English skills"). The mean scores for Items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 9 were 2.71, 3.14, 2.86, 3.00, and 2.43, respectively. These results indicate that average achievers also fall within the medium-level users of strategies, pointing to the need for strategy instruction. Notably, this group made frequent use of Items 3 and 4, with mean scores of 3.86 and 4.43, respectively.

For high achievers, the range of mean scores was 3.23 to 4.67. The least used strategy was Item 10 with a mean of 3.23 ("I reflect on my progress in learning English"), whereas the most commonly used was Item 5 with a mean of 4.67 ("I pay attention to my English mistakes and use them to improve"). The average scores for Items 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were 3.67, 3.86, 4.50, 4.67, 3.83, 4.00, 4.33, and 4.33, respectively. These findings suggest that high achievers are frequent users of metacognitive strategies, applying them more consistently than their average and low-achieving peers.

Table 2: Cognitive Strategy use

Achievement		Cogntv Strg 11	Cogntv Strg 12	Cogntv Strg 13	Cogntv Strg 14	Cogntv Strg 15	Cogntv Strg 16	Cogntv Strg 17	Cogntv Strg 18	Cogntv Strg 19	Cogntv Strg 20	Cogntv Strg 21
Low	Mean	2.35	2.29	2.41	2.82	2.71	2.82	2.59	3.00	2.65	2.59	2.65
	SD	.996	1.105	.870	1.468	1.047	1.074	1.004	1.369	1.115	1.004	.996
	Skewness	.031	.280	.306	.344	-.809	.392	.147	-.166	.501	-.273	1.258
	N	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
Medium	Mean	2.57	2.86	2.71	2.71	2.57	3.71	3.57	2.57	2.71	2.86	2.71
	SD	1.397	.900	1.254	.951	1.272	1.113	1.272	1.512	1.113	1.215	1.254
	Skewness	1.079	-1.569	.740	-.863	-.222	-.249	-.222	.620	-.249	1.147	1.450
	N	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
High	Mean	3.67	4.50	4.50	4.33	3.67	4.17	3.83	4.50	4.50	4.67	4.83
	SD	1.506	.548	.837	.816	1.751	1.169	.753	.548	.837	.516	.408
	Skewness	-1.270	.000	-1.537	-.857	-.919	-1.586	.313	.000	-1.537	-.968	-2.449
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Total	Mean	2.67	2.87	2.90	3.10	2.87	3.30	3.07	3.20	3.03	3.07	3.10
	SD	1.269	1.279	1.242	1.373	1.279	1.208	1.143	1.424	1.273	1.258	1.296
	Skewness	.358	-.052	.433	-.021	-.158	.003	.010	-.301	.149	.089	.515
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Items 11 to 21 were designed to assess how frequently high-, average-, and low-achieving students applied cognitive strategies in learning English (Table 2).

For low achievers, the reported frequency ranged from 2.29 to 3.00. The least used strategy was Item 12 ("I skim through an English passage quickly before reading it carefully"), while the most frequently applied was Item 18 ("I repeat or write new English words several times"). Other strategies used relatively often by this group were Item 14 with a mean of 2.00, Item 16 with 2.82, and Item 15 with 2.71, all ranking just below Item 18 with 3.00. Overall, these results suggest that low achievers are weak users of cognitive strategies. As Oxford (1990) points out, such students require substantial training in strategy use to strengthen their English learning ability.

Among average achievers, the use of cognitive strategies ranged from 2.57 to 3.71. Their most preferred strategy was Item 15 with a mean of 3.71 ("I watch TV programs or movies in English"),

while the least employed was Item 17 with 2.57 ("I repeat or write new English words several times"). Items 13, 19, and 21 each had a mean of 2.71, whereas Items 16 and 18 showed higher use, each with 3.57. These findings place average achievers in the category of medium to high users of cognitive strategies.

For high achievers, the frequency of cognitive strategy use fell between 3.67 and 4.83. The most frequently used strategy was Item 21 with a mean of 4.83 ("I initiate conversations in English"). In contrast, strategies such as Item 11 ("I read English for pleasure"), Item 15 ("I try to speak like a native English speaker"), and Item 20 ("I summarize what I hear or read in English") were applied less frequently compared to others. The overall pattern indicates that high achievers are strong users of cognitive strategies.

Interview findings further supported these results. High achievers reported that they frequently employ strategies such as watching English-language films and TV programs, reading for enjoyment, practicing English regularly, summarizing information from texts and audio, and reinforcing vocabulary by repeating or writing new words. They also mentioned engaging in practical writing activities like composing messages or letters in English. Most of them explained that they learn new vocabulary through contextual clues, though they sometimes rely on dictionaries or peers to clarify unfamiliar words. These qualitative findings align with the questionnaire results, confirming that high achievers demonstrate consistent and effective use of cognitive strategies.

Table 3: Memory Strategy use

Achievement		Memory Strg 22	Memory Strg 23	Memory Strg 24	Memory Strg 25	Memory Strg 26	Memory Strg 27	Memory Strg 28
Low	Mean	2.35	2.41	2.82	2.76	2.59	2.29	2.24
	SD	1.115	.870	.883	.970	.870	1.047	.970
	Skewness	.113	.306	-.237	.066	.339	.439	.399
	N	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
Medium	Mean	2.29	2.43	2.71	2.71	3.00	3.43	3.14
	SD	.951	1.134	.951	1.496	1.155	1.618	1.773
	Skewness	.863	-.235	-.863	.256	-.909	-.317	-.297
	N	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
High	Mean	3.67	3.17	3.00	3.50	3.50	4.50	4.17
	SD	1.366	.983	1.673	1.225	.837	1.225	.753
	Skewness	-.523	-.456	.384	.490	-1.537	-2.449	-.313
	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Total	Mean	2.60	2.57	2.83	2.90	2.87	3.00	2.83
	SD	1.221	.971	1.053	1.155	.973	1.486	1.367
	Skewness	.361	.041	.165	.207	-.198	.203	.148
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Items 22 to 28 were designed to investigate how often high-, average-, and low-achieving students employed memory strategies to retain what they had learned in English (Table 3).

For low achievers, the reported frequency ranged from 2.24 to 2.82. The least applied strategy was Item 28 ("I use new English words in a sentence so that I can remember them"), while the most frequently practiced was Item 24 ("I recall a new English word by creating a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used"). Other relatively less common strategies were Item 27 with a mean of 2.29 and Item 22 with 2.35. By contrast, strategies such as Item 25 with 2.71 ("I memorize

new words or expressions by recalling where they appeared—such as on a page, the board, or a sign") and Item 26 with 2.59 ("When I face unfamiliar English words, I make guesses to understand them") were more frequently used after Item 24. In general, low achievers can be described as weak users of memory strategies.

Among average achievers, the use of memory strategies ranged from 2.29 to 3.43. Their most frequently adopted approach was Item 27 with a mean of 3.43 ("I connect the sound of a new English word with an image or picture to help me remember it"). The least applied was Item 22 with 2.29 ("I review English lessons often"). Overall, the results showed that the pattern of memory strategy use among average achievers did not differ greatly from that of low achievers.

For high achievers, memory strategy use ranged from 3.00 to 4.50. The most frequently applied strategy was Item 27 with a mean of 4.50 ("I link the sound of a new word with an image or picture to make it easier to recall"). On the other hand, Item 23 with 3.17 ("I connect what I already know with new information learned in English") and Item 24 with 3.00 ("I visualize a situation in which the new word might be used") were the least frequently used. Overall, the data suggest that high achievers rely more extensively on memory strategies compared to their peers.

The interview findings supported these quantitative results. High achievers reported using a wide range of techniques to aid memory, such as reviewing lessons regularly, forming mental pictures of situations in which new words might appear, relating new knowledge to prior knowledge, incorporating new words into sentences, recalling words based on their location on a page, sign, or board, and even writing new vocabulary on paper or their hands to review while walking or sitting. In contrast, the average achievers interviewed mentioned applying only a few strategies, such as associating word sounds with images, reflecting on what they had been taught, and reviewing lessons periodically. Low achievers, however, admitted that they seldom used deliberate strategies for memorization. Both the statistical analysis and interview responses confirmed that high achievers clearly outperformed average and low achievers in the effective use of memory strategies.

Table 4: Social Strategy use

Achievement		Social Strg 30	Social Strg 31	Social Strg 32	Social Strg 33	Social Strg 34
Low	Mean	2.18	2.82	2.47	2.76	2.24
	SD	1.074	1.131	1.179	1.033	1.200
	Skewness	.293	.388	.469	.146	.962
	N	17	17	17	17	17
Medium	Mean	2.14	2.71	3.86	2.71	3.00
	SD	1.215	1.113	1.215	1.496	1.155
	Skewness	.414	1.784	-.414	.256	.909
	N	7	7	7	7	7
High	Mean	4.83	5.00	5.00	4.17	4.17
	SD	.408	.000	.000	1.169	1.169
	Skewness	-2.449	.	.	-1.586	-1.586
	N	6	6	6	6	6
Total	Mean	2.70	3.23	3.30	3.03	2.80
	SD	1.466	1.331	1.466	1.273	1.375
	Skewness	.280	.198	-.139	.041	.386
	N	30	30	30	30	30

Items 30 to 34 were designed to attain data on how frequently high, average, and low achievers employ social strategies to accelerate their progress in English (Table 4). The result revealed that the frequency of social strategy use for low achievers ranges from 2.18 to 2.82. Item 31: "If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again." was the most frequently used strategy, and Item 30: "I try to learn about the culture of English speakers." was the least frequently used strategy.

Average learners' social strategy use ranges from 2.14–3.86. The most frequently used social strategy for average achievers is Item 32, with a mean score of 3.86 ("I ask questions in English"), and the least frequently used strategy was Item 30, with a mean score of 2.14 ("I try to learn about the culture of English speakers"). The data revealed that average achievers' use of social strategies was not different from that of low achievers.

The frequency of social strategy use for high achievers ranges from 4.17–5.00. Item 31 and 32 received a 5.00 mean score. "If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again" and "I ask questions in English" were the most frequently used social strategies used by high achievers. However, Item 33, with a mean score of 4.17, "I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk," and Item 34, with a mean score of 4.17, "I practice English with other students," were the least frequently used social strategies, though the range is high for strategy usage.

Table 5: Compensation Strategies use

Achievement		Compensation Strategy 35	Compensation Strategy 36	Compensation Strategy 37
Low	Mean	2.47	2.47	2.00
	SD	.943	1.007	1.000
	Skewness	-.158	.091	.425
	N	17	17	17
Medium	Mean	2.57	2.71	2.43
	SD	.787	1.604	1.272
	Skewness	1.115	.305	1.581
	N	7	7	7
High	Mean	3.67	4.33	4.33
	SD	1.211	1.211	.516
	Skewness	-.075	-1.952	.968
	N	6	6	6
Total	Mean	2.73	2.90	2.57
	SD	1.048	1.373	1.331
	Skewness	.387	.192	.411
	N	30	30	30

Items 35 to 37 were designed to attain data on how frequently high, average, and low achievers employ compensation strategies to accelerate their progress in English (Table 5). The result revealed that the frequency of compensation strategy usage for low achievers ranges from 2.00 to 2.47. Item 37, "I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English," was the least frequently used strategy, and items 35, "I try to guess what the other person will say next in English," and item 36, "I read English without looking up every new word," with a mean score of 2.47, were the most frequently used strategies, though the mean scores were very close to low stratagem usage.

Average learner compensation strategy use ranges from 2.43 to 32.71. The most frequently used compensation strategy usage for average achievers is Item 36, with a mean score of 2.71 for "I read English without looking up every new word," and

the least frequently used strategy was Item 37, with a mean score of 2.43 for "I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English." The data revealed that average achievers' use of compensation strategies was not different from that of low achievers.

The frequency of compensation strategy usage for high achievers ranges from 3.67 to 4.33. Item 36 and 37, with a mean score of 4.33, "I read English without looking up every new word" and "I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English," respectively, were the most frequently used compensation strategies used by high achievers. However, Item 35, with a mean score of 3.67, "I try to guess what the other person will say next in English," was the least frequently used compensation strategy, though the range is high in strategy usage.

The results from the interview revealed that the high achievers were able to identify about three compensation strategies, such as using gestures, synonyms, paraphrasing, and so on. On the contrary, both the average achievers and the low achievers managed to refer to fewer language learning strategies. This clearly depicts that the more effective learners statistically surpass the other two groups in employing compensation strategies.

Table 6: Affective Strategy use

Achievement		Affective Strategy 38	Affective Strategy 39	Affective Strategy 40
Low	Mean	2.24	2.47	2.41
	SD	1.251	.943	1.064
	Skewness	.798	-.158	.084
	N	17	17	17
Medium	Mean	2.71	3.00	3.57
	SD	1.496	.816	1.134
	Skewness	.256	.000	-.725
	N	7	7	7
High	Mean	3.33	4.50	3.50
	SD	1.211	.548	1.225
	Skewness	.075	.000	-.490
	N	6	6	6
Total	Mean	2.57	3.00	2.90
	SD	1.331	1.145	1.213
	Skewness	.411	.000	-.045
	N	30	30	30

Items 38–40 were set up to collect data on how frequently the target population of this study applies affective strategies (Table 6). The result revealed that the frequency of affective strategy usage for low achievers ranges from 2.24 to 2.47. Item 38, "I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English," was the least frequently used affective strategy, and Item 39, with a mean score of 2.47, "I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English," was the most frequently used strategy, though the mean score was very close to low strategy usage.

Average learners' affective strategy usage ranges from 2.71 to 3.57. The most frequently used affective strategy for average achievers is Item 40, with a mean score of 3.57. "I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English" was the most frequently used strategy. However, Item 38, with a mean score of 2.71, "I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English," was the least used affective strategy.

The frequency of affective strategy usage for high achievers ranges from 3.33 to 4.50. item with a mean score of 4.50 "I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English." was the most frequently used affective strategy used by high achievers. However, Item 38, with a mean score of 3.33, "I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English," was the least frequently used affective strategy, which is in the category of medium strategy usage.

The findings from the interview also support the results from the questionnaire. Respondents in the interview were asked to describe the types of language learning strategies they often utilize to control their anxiety when they speak in front of people, such as during presentations. In this regard, according to the high achievers in the interview, recognizing their anxiety, encouraging themselves, talking to someone else about their feelings, and trying to relax during using English are the four types of strategies that they mostly use to reduce their negative feelings when using English. One average performer in the interview responded that she usually tries to think about her strong side when using English. The other respondent said that she sometimes tries to relax while using English. Low achievers reported that listening to music or religious songs, sharing their feelings, and praying to their creator are three types of strategies they frequently use by the time they have an English presentation. This demonstrates the superiority of the high achievers over the average achievers, as well as the low achievers, in applying affective strategies.

The Table 7 below provides some useful descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals for the dependent variables (metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, memory strategies, social strategies, compensation strategies, and affective strategies) for each separate group (low achievers, average achievers, and high achievers), and when all groups are combined (total). These figures are useful when we need to describe our data.

The mean metacognitive strategy use of high-achieving students, average-achieving students, and low-achieving students was 4.0833, 3.2143, and 2.6412, respectively. This indicates that the high achievers use metacognitive strategies more than the average students do, and the medium achievers use these strategies more than the low achievers do. It can be generalized that there is high, medium, and low metacognitive strategy usage among the three groups, respectively.

The mean cognitive strategy use of high-achieving students, average-achieving students, and low-achieving students was 4.2879, 2.8701, and 2.6257, respectively. This implies that the high achievers utilize such types of LLSs better than the average person and the low achievers do. This leads us to conclude that there is high cognitive strategy usage for high achievers and low cognitive strategy usage for medium achievers and low achievers.

The mean memory strategy implementation of high-achieving students, average-achieving students, and low-achieving students was 3.6429, 2.8163, and 2.4958, respectively. This indicates that the high achievers employ them more than the average and the low achievers do. This implies that there is medium memory strategy usage for high achievers and low memory strategy usage for both medium achievers and low achievers.

The mean social strategy application of high-achieving students, average-achieving students, and low-achieving students was found to be 4.6333, 2.8857, and 2.4941, respectively. This means that the high achievers apply social strategies more than the average achievers, as well as the low achievers. This can be generalized to say that there is high social strategy usage among high achievers. Contrary to this, low memory strategy usage for medium and low achievers was observed.

The mean compensation strategy used by high-achieving students, average-achieving students, and low-achieving students was 4.1111, 2.5714, and 2.3137, respectively. This reveals that the high achievers use compensation strategies more frequently than the average employee and the low achievers do. This indicates the availability of high compensation strategy use for high achievers as opposed to both medium and low achievers.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Summeted Variables

Main Variables Vs Achievement		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% CI for Mean Lower Bound	95% CI for Mean Upper Bound	Min.	Max.
Metacognitive strategies	Low	17	2.6412	.80550	.19536	2.2270	3.0553	1.20	3.90
	Medium	7	3.2143	.28536	.10785	2.9504	3.4782	2.90	3.70
	High	6	4.0833	.44460	.18151	3.6168	4.5499	3.50	4.60
	Total	30	3.0633	.85681	.15643	2.7434	3.3833	1.20	4.60
Cognitive strategies	Low	17	2.6257	.69076	.16753	2.2705	2.9808	1.45	3.73
	Medium	7	2.8701	.54761	.20698	2.3637	3.3766	2.00	3.64
	High	6	4.2879	.43186	.17631	3.8347	4.7411	3.64	4.64
	Total	30	3.0152	.88690	.16193	2.6840	3.3463	1.45	4.64
Memory strategies	Low	17	2.4958	.57169	.13866	2.2019	2.7897	1.43	3.43
	Medium	7	2.8163	.86392	.32653	2.0173	3.6153	1.57	4.00
	High	6	3.6429	.54772	.22361	3.0681	4.2177	3.00	4.29
	Total	30	2.8000	.76665	.13997	2.5137	3.0863	1.43	4.29
Social strategies	Low	17	2.4941	.87783	.21291	2.0428	2.9455	1.00	4.60
	Medium	7	2.8857	1.02539	.38756	1.9374	3.8340	1.60	4.40
	High	6	4.6333	.29439	.12019	4.3244	4.9423	4.40	5.00
	Total	30	3.0133	1.16729	.21312	2.5775	3.4492	1.00	5.00
Compensation strategies	Low	17	2.3137	.69192	.16782	1.9580	2.6695	1.00	3.33
	Medium	7	2.5714	1.08379	.40963	1.5691	3.5738	1.67	4.67
	High	6	4.1111	.17213	.07027	3.9305	4.2918	4.00	4.33
	Total	30	2.7333	1.00725	.18390	2.3572	3.1094	1.00	4.67
Affective strategies	Low	17	2.3725	.78954	.19149	1.9666	2.7785	1.00	4.33
	Medium	7	3.0952	.46004	.17388	2.6698	3.5207	2.67	4.00
	High	6	3.7778	.68853	.28109	3.0552	4.5003	3.00	4.67
	Total	30	2.8222	.89157	.16278	2.4893	3.1551	1.00	4.67

The mean affective strategy utilization of high-achieving students, average-achieving students, and low-achieving students was 3.7778, 3.0952, and 2.3725, respectively. This infers that the high achievers surpass the average in using affective strategies, and the medium achievers use these strategies more frequently than the low achievers do. As a result, it is possible to conclude that high achievers and medium achievers use a medium affective strategy. Yet, it is low for low-achieving students.

Generally, as indicated in Table 7, the mean scores could be ranked in the following order of learning strategies used:

For high-achieving learners: 1^{st} = social learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 4.635, SD = 0.294), 2^{nd} = memory learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 4.633, SD = 0.294), 3^{rd} = cognitive learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 4.287, SD = 0.431), 4^{th} = compensation learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 4.111, SD = 0.172), 5^{th} = metacognitive learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 4.083, SD = 0.444), and 6^{th} = affective learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 3.777, SD = 0.688). On the basis of the data provided so far, social strategies, which are known as indirect strategies under Oxford's system, are the most frequently used strategies of all the six main language learning strategies with regard to high achievers. On the contrary, these learners use metacognitive and affective strategies least of all. This leads us to conclude that high achievers have better knowledge with respect to direct LLSs than indirect LLSs.

For average-achieving learners: 1^{st} = metacognitive learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 3.214, SD = 0.285), 2^{nd} = affective learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 3.095, SD = 0.460), 3^{rd} = social learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.886, SD = 1.025), 4^{th} = cognitive learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.870, SD = 0.547), 5^{th} = memory learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.819, SD = 0.863), and 6^{th} = compensation learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.571, SD = 1.083). In this case, it reveals that strategy usage is somewhat moderate. At the same time, the data indicate that unlike high achievers, average achievers more frequently apply indirect LLSs compared to direct LLSs.

For low-achieving learners: 1^{st} = metacognitive learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.641, SD = 0.805); 2^{nd} = cognitive learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.626, SD = 0.690). 3^{rd} = memory learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.496, SD = 0.571), 4^{th} = social learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.494, SD = 0.877), 5^{th} = affective learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.373, SD = 0.789), and 6^{th} = compensation learning strategies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.314, SD = 0.691). It can be concluded that there was low strategy use.

Table 8: ANOVA Table

Variables		**Sum of Squares**	*df*	**Mean Square**	F	$Sig.$
Metacognitive strategies	Between Groups	9.432	2	4.716	10.738	.000
	Within Groups	11.858	27	.439		
	Total	21.290	29			
Cognitive strategies	Between Groups	12.445	2	6.223	16.207	.000
	Within Groups	10.366	27	.384		
	Total	22.811	29			
Memory strategies	Between Groups	5.837	2	2.919	7.032	.003
	Within Groups	11.207	27	.415		
	Total	17.045	29			
Social strategies	Between Groups	20.443	2	10.222	14.471	.000
	Within Groups	19.071	27	.706		
	Total	39.515	29			
Compensation strategies	Between Groups	14.566	2	7.283	13.237	.000
	Within Groups	14.856	27	.550		
	Total	29.422	29			
Affective strategies	Between Groups	9.438	2	4.719	9.359	.001
	Within Groups	13.614	27	.504		
	Total	23.052	29			

Table 8 shows the output of the ANOVA analysis and whether there is a statistically significant difference among our group means. We can see that the significance value for metacognitive strategies is 0.000 *(F (2, 29) = 10.738, p = 0.000)*, the significance value for cognitive strategies is 0.000 *(F (2, 29) = 16.207, p = 0.000)*, the significance value for memory strategies is 0.003 *(F (2, 29) = 7.032, p = 0.003)*, the significance value for social strategies is 0.000 *(F (2, 29) = 14.471, p = 0.000)*, the significance value for compensation strategies is 0.000 *(F (2, 29) = 13.237, p = 0.000)*, and the significance value for affective strategies is 0.001 *(F (2, 29) = 9.359, p = 0.001)*, respectively. The result revealed that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean of all six constructs of language learning strategy use among the three ability groups.

In order to identify the specific groups that differed, the $posthoc$ test was used. The multiple comparisons depict which groups differed from each other.

Table 9: Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable	(I) Achievement	(J) Achievement	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	$Sig.$	95% CI	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Metacognitive strategies	Low	Medium	-.57311	.29762	.065	-1.1838	.0376
		High	-1.44216*	.31469	.000	-2.0879	-.7965
	Medium	Low	.57311	.29762	.065	-.0376	1.1838
		High	-.86905*	.36870	.026	-1.6256	-.1125
	High	Low	1.44216*	.31469	.000	.7965	2.0879
		Medium	.86905*	.36870	.026	.1125	1.6256
Cognitive strategies	Low	Medium	-.24446	.27827	.387	-.8154	.3265
		High	-1.66221*	.29423	.000	-2.2659	-1.0585
	Medium	Low	.24446	.27827	.387	-.3265	.8154
		High	-1.41775*	.34473	.000	-2.1251	-.7104
	High	Low	1.66221*	.29423	.000	1.0585	2.2659
		Medium	1.41775*	.34473	.000	.7104	2.1251
Memory strategies	Low	Medium	-.32053	.28934	.278	-.9142	.2731
		High	-1.14706*	.30594	.001	-1.7748	-.5193
	Medium	Low	.32053	.28934	.278	-.2731	.9142
		High	-.82653*	.35844	.029	-1.5620	-.0911
	High	Low	1.14706*	.30594	.001	.5193	1.7748
		Medium	.82653*	.35844	.029	.0911	1.5620
Social strategies	Low	Medium	-.39160	.37743	.309	-1.1660	.3828
		High	-2.13922*	.39909	.000	-2.9581	-1.3203
	Medium	Low	.39160	.37743	.309	-.3828	1.1660
		High	-1.74762*	.46758	.001	-2.7070	-.7882
	High	Low	2.13922*	.39909	.000	1.3203	2.9581
		Medium	1.74762*	.46758	.001	.7882	2.7070
Compensation strategies	Low	Medium	-.25770	.33312	.446	-.9412	.4258
		High	-1.79739*	.35223	.000	-2.5201	-1.0747
	Medium	Low	.25770	.33312	.446	-.4258	.9412
		High	-1.53968*	.41268	.001	-2.3864	-.6929
	High	Low	1.79739*	.35223	.000	1.0747	2.5201
		Medium	1.53968*	.41268	.001	.6929	2.3864
Affective strategies	Low	Medium	-.72269*	.31889	.032	-1.3770	-.0684
		High	-1.40523*	.33719	.000	-2.0971	-.7134
	Medium	Low	.72269*	.31889	.032	.0684	1.3770
		High	-.68254	.39506	.095	-1.4931	.1280
	High	Low	1.40523*	.33719	.000	.7134	2.0971
		Medium	.68254	.39506	.095	-.1280	1.4931

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The data in Table 9 revealed that for *metacognitive learning strategies*, there was a statistically significant difference among groups as determined by a one-way ANOVA (F (2, 29) = 10.738, p = 0.000). A LCD $posthoc$ test revealed that in the use of *metacognitive learning strategies*, the high-achieving learners were statistically significantly higher than the low-achieving learners (1.442 $\pm$ 0.314, p =.000) and the average-achieving learners (0.869 $\pm$ 0.368, p =.026). There was no statistically significant difference between the medium-achieving learners' and the low-achieving learners' groups (p = 0.065).

For *cognitive learning strategies*, a statistically significant difference was displayed among the groups as determined by a one-way ANOVA (F (2, 29) = 16.207, p = 0.000). A LCD post hoc test showed that in the use of *cognitive learning strategies*, the high-achieving learners were statistically significantly higher than the low-achieving learners (1.662 $\pm$ 0.294, p =.000) and the average-achieving learners (1.417 $\pm$ 0.344, p =.000). No statistically significant difference was observed between the medium-achieving learners' and the low-achieving learners' groups (p = 0.387).

For *memory learning strategies*, there was a statistically significant difference among groups as determined by a one-way ANOVA (F (2, 29) = 7.032, p = 0.003). A LCD post hoc test indicated that in the use of *memory learning strategies*, the high achievers were statistically significantly higher than the low achievers (1.147 $\pm$ 0.305, p =.001) and the average achieving learners (0.826 $\pm$ 0.358, p =.029). There was no statistically significant difference between the medium-achieving and low-achieving groups (p = 0.278).

For *social learning strategies*, there was a statistically significant difference among groups as determined by a one-way ANOVA (F (2, 29) = 14.471, p = 0.000). A LCD post hoc test revealed that in the use of social learning strategies, the high-achieving learners were statistically significantly higher than the low-achieving learners (2.139 $\pm$ 0.399, p =.000) and the average-achieving learners (1.747 $\pm$ 0.467, p =.001). There was no statistically significant difference between the medium-achieving learners' and the low-achieving learners' groups (p = 0.309).

Regarding the *compensation learning strategies*, it is possible to see the existence of a statistically significant difference among the three groups as determined by a one-way ANOVA (F (2, 29) = 13.237, p = 0.000). A LCD post hoc test demonstrated that regarding the utilization of *compensation learning strategies*, the high-achieving learners were statistically significantly higher than the low-achieving learners (1.797 $\pm$ 0.352, p =.000) and the average-achieving learners (1.539 $\pm$ 0.412, p =.001). There was no statistically significant difference between the medium-achieving learners' and the low-achieving learners' groups (p = 0.446).

For *affective learning strategies*, it is possible to say that there is a statistically significant difference among groups as determined by a one-way ANOVA test (F (2, 29) = 9.359, p = 0.001). A LCD post hoc test showed that with regard to the use of affective learning strategies, the low-achieving learners were statistically significantly lower than the average-achieving learners (-0.722 $\pm$ 0.318, p =.032) and the high-achieving learners (-1.405 $\pm$ 0.337, p =.000). There was no statistically significant difference between the average-achieving learners and the high-achieving learners' groups (p = 0.095).

To put it in a nutshell, the responses of the subjects to the interview questions point out that the more successful learners, in contrast with the average and the less successful learners have high language learning strategy utilization in learning the English language. Thus, the data gained from the interviews corresponds with the data obtained through the questionnaire.

5 Discussions

As can be observed from the students' responses in this study, it would seem reasonable to conclude that learners' use of language learning strategies in learning English is unsatisfactory. More specifically, the three groups (the high achievers, the average achievers, and the low achievers) did not equally utilize language learning strategies to develop their English language performance. At higher levels, low achievers use neither direct nor indirect LLS, indicating a lack of understanding of their strategy's application.

On the other hand, average achievers use only two strategies (the metacognitive and the affective strategies) at high frequency out of the six main language learning strategies. This means that average achievers lack good experience with the implementation of the three subcategories of direct strategies and social strategies under indirect strategies.

Unlike the two achievers, the high achievers utilize all six main language learning strategies, both direct and indirect, at a high frequency level. This indicates that the high achievers outperform their average and low counterparts by applying a wide range of language learning strategies, which apparently implies their better experience with their strategy use in English language learning. In supporting this, research on the utilization of foreign language learning strategies also reflects similar results in favor of more successful learners as higher and more frequent users (Al-Qahtani, 2013; Gerami & Baighlou, 2011; Giang & Tuan, 2018; Habok & Magyar, 2018; Foster *et al*., 2017; Gerami & Baighlou, 2011; Chen, 2009). Furthermore, it is in accord with research on language learning strategies that has particularly focused on the characteristics of good and bad learners. For instance, good learners provide reasons why they are efficient learners; their tactics are related to the type of learning task, and arrangements are made according to changing situations; they ask for support from their peers, teachers, or family when necessary; and they have confidence in their abilities to learn.

At the same time, a few studies reveal that metacognitive strategies were found to be employed predominantly by high achievers (Chamot, 2005; Lai, 2005; Vandergrift, 2003). Nevertheless, this study disproves this fact for the reason that social strategies are applied more frequently by high achievers in the first place. The current study also refutes the notion that more successful learners use monitoring strategies under metacognitive strategies more frequently (Vandergrift, 2003), because they use finding opportunities strategies under this principal category more frequently.

Generally, the present study recognizes that there is a strong connection between learners' language strategies and their language performance. Regarding the positive relationship between high use of LSS and language performance, literature also proves its existence (Oxford and Burry, 1995).

6 Conclusions

The general objective of this study was to explore the language learning strategies used by English majors. The data in the students' responses confirm that the high achievers, the average achievers, and the low achievers employ the six major language learning strategies at different frequencies. This could be ranked in the following order of strategy application:

High-achieving learners employ language learning strategies in the following order: social learning strategies, memory learning strategies, cognitive learning strategies, compensation learning strategies, metacognitive learning strategies, and affective learning strategies. It can be concluded that high-achieving Ethiopian English learners are good language learners.

Average-achieving learners employ language learning strategies in the following order: metacognitive learning strategies, affective learning strategies, social learning strategies, cognitive learning strategies, memory learning strategies, and compensation learning strategies. The data revealed that average learners were not better than low achievers in some strategies, such as memory, social, and compensation. This indicated that this group of learners needs language learning strategy training and close attention from their teachers.

Low-achieving learners also utilize language learning strategies in the order of: metacognitive learning strategies, cognitive learning strategies, memory learning strategies, social learning strategies, affective learning strategies, and compensation learning strategies. According to the data, this group of students is bad at using strategies and bad at achieving. Therefore, they should be given due attention in language learning strategy training.

Both high and average achievers revealed statistically significant mean differences in all language learning strategies excluding affective strategies as examined by one-way ANOVA. Meanwhile, it was found that a statistically significant mean dif-

ference existed between the high achievers and the low achievers in all major language learning strategies. However, no significant mean difference was discovered between average and low achievers. For this reason, it can be concluded that there was high strategy usage with regard to high-achieving learners, approximately medium strategy usage for medium-achieving learners, and low strategy usage for low-achieving learners. This actually purports that more effective students have better experiences using LLS as compared with medium achievers and low achievers.

Conflict of Interest

The author of this article has declared that there is no conflict of interest. He also confirmed that he has thoroughly read and approved the manuscript to be published in this journal.

Ethical Approval

Consent was sought form the research participants. Confidentiality was maintained in reporting information.

References

Al-Qahtani, M. (2013). Relationship between English language, learning strategies, attitudes, motivation, and students' academic achievement. *Education in Medicine Journal*, 5(3), 19-29.

Bonyadi, A., Nikou, F., & Shahbaz, S. (2012). The relationship between EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs and their language learning strategy use. *English Language Teaching*, 5(8), 113-121.

Bedell, D. & Oxford, R. (1996). *Cross-cultural comparison of language learning strategies in the People's Republic of China and other countries*. **In**: R. Oxford (Ed.). Language learning strategies around the world: Cross-cultural perspectives (pp. 47- 60). Honolulu: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, University of Hawaii.

Bruten, J. (2001). Strategies for success: Profiling the effective learner of German. *Foreign Language Annals*, 34 (2), 216-225.

Chamot, A.U. (2005). Language learning strategy instruction: current issues and research. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*. 25,112-130.

Chen, M. (2009). Influence of grade level on perceptual learning style preferences and language learning strategies of Taiwanese English as a foreign language learners. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 19(2), 304-308.

Fitzpatrick, D. (2011). Making sense of the English language proficiency in Thailand: An exploration of teachers' practices and dispositions. [Doctoral thesis, University of Exeter].

Foster, S., Sriphrom, C., & Nampanya, R. (2017). An investigation of language learning strategies used, gender and language proficiency among first-year students at Rajamangala University of Technology Isan. *RMUTI Journal Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(1), 92-1-2.

Fewell, N. (2010). Language learning strategies and English language proficiency: an investigation of Japanese EFL university students. *Tesol Journal*. 2, 159-174.

Gerami, M., & Baighlou, S. (2011). Language learning strategies used by successful and unsuccessful Iranian EFL students. Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 29, 1567-1576.

Ghavamnia, M., Kassaian, Z., & Dabaghi, A. (2011). The relationship between language learning strategies, language learning beliefs, motivation, and proficiency: A study of EFL learners in Iran. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(5), 1156-1161.

Giang, B., & Tuan, V. (2018). Language learning strategies of Vietnamese EFL freshmen. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(3), 61-83.

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

Griffiths, C. (2013). The strategy factor in successful language learning. Multilingual Matters.

Griffiths, C., & Cansiz, G. (2015). Language learning strategies: A holistic view. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 5(3), 473-493.

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

Hashim, H., Yunus, M., & Hashim, H. (2018). Language learning strategies used by Adult learners of teaching English as a second language (TESL). *TESOL International Journal*, 13(4), 39-48.

Hsiao,T. & Oxford, R. (2002). Comparing theories of language learning strategies: A confirmatory factor analysis. *The Modern Language Journal*, 86(3), 368-383.

Kanchai, T. (2019). Thai EFL university lecturers' viewpoints towards impacts of the CEFR on their English language curricula and teaching practice. *NIDA Journal of Language and Communication*, 24(35), 23-47.

Khamkhien, A. (2011). Language learning strategies used by Thai and Vietnamese university students. *Manusya: Journal of Humanities*, 14(2), 1-23.

Lai, Y.C. (2005). Language learning strategy use and language proficiency for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners in Taiwan. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California, California: USA.

Lan, R. & Oxford, R. (2003). Language learning strategy profiles of elementary school students in Taiwan. *IRAL*, 41(4), 339- 379.

Nguyen, H., & Terry, D. (2017). English learning strategies among EFL learners: *A narrative approach. Journal of Language Learning*, 3(1), 4-19.

Oxford, R.L. (1990). *Language learning strategies and beyond*: A look at strategies in the context of styles. **In**: S. S. Magnan (Ed.), Shifting the Instructional Focus to the Learner (pp. 35-55). Middlebury, VT: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Oxford, R. (2011). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies*. Routledge.

Oxford, R. (2017). *Teaching and Researching Language Learning Strategies*: Self-Regulation in Context (2^{nd} edition). Routledge.

Paredes, E. (2010). Language Learning Strategy Use by Colombian Adult English Language Learners: A Phenomenological Study. Unpublished PhD thesis. Florida International University.

Phonhan, P. (2016). Language learning strategies of EFL education students: A case study of Thai undergraduate students. *Silpakorn University Journal of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts*, 16(2), 115-135.

Pornpibul, N. (2005). Quantitative and qualitative views of EFL learners' strategies: A focus on communication strategies. *Journal of Studies in the English Language*, 2.

Prakongchati, N. (2012). The use of language learning strategies in English learning contexts. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 29(1), 65-87.

Rao, Z. (2016). Language learning strategies and English proficiency: Interpretations from information-processing theory. *The Language Learning Journal*, 44(1), 90-106.

Rardprakhon, J. (2016). Language learning strategies used by Thai engineering freshmen with different English academic achievement levels. [Master's thesis, Burapha University, Chonburi].

Srisupha, R. (2012). Thai students' language learning strategies. *Quarterly Journal of Chinese Studies*, 2(2), 53-67.

Suwanarak, K. (2015). Learning English as Thai adult learners: An insight into experience in using learning strategies. *English Language Teaching*, 8(12), 144-157.

Taguchi, T. (2002). Learner factors affecting the use of learning strategies in cross-cultural contexts. *Prospect*, 17(2), 18-34.

Thomas, N., & Rose, H. (2019). Do language learning strategies need to be self-directed? Disentangling strategies from self-regulated learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 53(1), 248-257.

Tieocharoen, W., & Rimkeeratikul, S. (2019). Learning strategies and teaching methods in Thai and Vietnamese universities. *Arab World English Journal*, 10(3), 99-112.

Toomnan, P. (2019). Types of study program and language learning strategies of university students: A case in the northeast of Thailand. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(3), 1850-1861.

Vandergrift, L. (2003). Orchestrating Strategy Use: Toward a Model of the Skilled Second Language Listener. *Language Learning*, 53(3), 463-496.

Vlckova, K. et al. (2013). Classification theories of foreign language learning strategies: an exploratory analysis. *Studia paedagogica*. 8 (4). 93-114.

Wharton, G. (2000). Language learning strategy use of bilingual foreign language learners in Singapore. *Language Learning*, 50(2), 203-244.

Williams, M. & Burden, R. (1997). Psychology for language teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wu, Y. (2008). Language learning strategies used by students at different proficiency levels. *Asian EFL Journal*, 10(4), 75-95.

Zhang, L., & Xiao, Y. (2014). Language learning strategies, motivation and EFL proficiency: A study of Chinese tertiary-level non-English majors. *Asian Englishes*, 9(2), 20-47.

Zhong, Q. (2015). Changes in two migrant learners' beliefs, learning strategy use and language achievements in a New Zealand context. *System*, 53, 107-118.