EFFECT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES ON READING COMPREHENSION

Şermin ARSLAN

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Department of English Language and Literature

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Mehmet ÇELİK

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T.C.
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INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Supervisor : Prof. Dr. Mehmet ÇELİK (M.U.)

Examing Committe Members : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmet KAYINTU (B.U.)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emine Yeşim BEDLEK (B.U.)

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   Üye :   **Yrd. Doç. Dr. Ahmet KAYINTU (B.Ü.)**   İMZA
   Üye :   **Yrd. Doç. Dr. Emine Yeşim BEDLEK (B.Ü.)**   İMZA

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ÖZ

Bu çalışma, dil öğrenme stratejilerinin okuma becerisi üzerine etkisini araştırmaktadır. Bu amaçla, katılımcıların dil öğrenme strateji kullanımları ile okuma anlama becerileri arasındaki ilişki incelenmiştir. Çalışmada yaş, cinsiyet ve önceki İngilizce deneyimlerinin katılımcıların strateji kullanmaları üzerine etkisi olup olmadığı da araştırılmıştır. Çalışma verileri 140 Bingöl Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü öğrencisinden okuma testi ve ikinci dil olarak ya da yabancı dil olarak İngilizceyi öğrenen öğrencilere yönelik olarak hazırlanmış Oxford'un (1990) Dil Öğrenme Strateji Envanteri uygulanarak elde edilmiştir. Okuma testi, öğrencileri yeterlilik düzeylerine göre gruplama amacıyla kullanılırken strateji envanteri öğrencilerin dil öğrenme strateji kullanımları ile ilgili veri elde etmek amacıyla uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler, tanımlayıcı istatistikler ve istatistik analiz yöntemi ki-kare testi yoluyla analiz edilmiştir.

Nicel verilerin istatistiksel analizleri genel strateji kullanımı ile öğrencilerin okuma anlama performansları arasında önemli bir ilişkinin olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Diğer yandan, bilişsel stratejilerin başarılı öğrencileri başarısız olanlardan ayırmada etkili olduğu belirtilmiştir. Ayrıca, her bir strateji maddesinin ayrı ayrı incelenmesi sonucunda 50 maddenin 7'sinin öğrencilerin başarı düzeylerinde etkili olduğu saptanmıştır. Diğer 47 maddenin örencilerin başarı düzeylerine herhangi bir etkisinin olmadığı rapor edilmiştir. Ayrıca, katılımcıların alt grup strateji kullanımları arasında farklılıklar gözlenmiştir. Bilişsel stratejilerin başarılı grup tarafından daha çok kullanılmıştır. Telafi stratejileri her iki grup tarafından en fazla tercih edilirken, duyuşsal stratejilerin en az tercih edildiği belirlenmiştir. Bunun dışında, strateji kullanımı ile yaş ve cinsiyet arasında her hangi bir ilişki bulunmazken strateji kullanımı ile önceki İngilizce deneyimi arasında ters yönde bir ilişkinin olduğu kaydedilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dil Öğrenme Stratejileri, Okuma Becerisi, Etkili Faktörler

ABSTRACT

Effect of Language Learning Strategies on Reading Comprehension

This study investigates the effect of language learning strategies on reading comprehension of learners. For this purpose, language learning strategy use and preferences of participating students as well as the relationship between strategy use and reading comprehension performances of participants were examined. The study also investigates whether variables age, gender and duration of English study had an effect on learners' choice and use of language learning strategies. The data were obtained from 140 English Language and Literature students at Bingol University, applying a reading comprehension test and Oxford's (1990) SILL for SL/FL learners. The reading comprehension was used to determine students' proficiency level, while the other test was used to specify the strategies learners use. The data collected were analysed via descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, percentage) and the statistical analysis Chi Square test.

The results of the quantitative data revealed no significant relationship between overall strategy use and reading comprehension performances of learners, although high proficiency learners were noted to use strategies more frequently than their less proficient peers. On the other hand, cognitive strategies were found to be predictor of success among students. Besides, the analysis at individual strategy item level showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between 7 strategies (out of 50) and proficiency level of students. Remaining 43 strategies were not found to correlate with the reading proficiency level. Learners also varied in using subgroup strategies: cognitive strategies were used more by high proficiency level students than their less proficient peers. Both high and low level students reported to use compensation strategies at highest frequency levels, while affective strategies were noted to be used the least. Besides, strategy use did not correlate significantly with either age or gender. On the other hand, a negative correlation between duration of study and strategy use was reported in the study.

Key Words: Language Learning Strategies, Reading Comprehension, influential variables

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Presentation

This study deals with the use of language learning strategies in relation to reading comprehension performances of students at different proficiency levels, gender, age groups and duration of English study. Any insight into how learners approach the task of learning in terms of strategy use will definitely bring about the issue of efficient practices, which may enable teachers to be more effective in their efforts. This chapter introduces the background of the study, history of language teaching, the statement of the problem, purpose of this particular study, research questions as well as the limitations and the definitions of the operational terms in the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Many teaching approaches, methods and techniques proposed for language learning have been used throughout the 20th and 21st century, each with a certain theoretical base (Griffiths and Parr, 2001). Although no proposed method was not thoroughly researched to give empirically convincing results, when practitioners of language education deemed a method appropriate, given their extensive experiences in the classroom, that method has become more favourable. It would not be too wrong to say that there has been widespread and unquestioned acceptance of these approaches, methods and techniques for effective teaching. For instance, why would one practitioner or a reseracher not criticise the theoretical underpinings of Audiolingualism (i.e. Behaviourism) up until 1970s. This subsection examines Grammar-Translation Method, The Direct Method, The Audialingual Method, Communicative Language Teaching, and Cognitive Approach.

It is usually accepted that earliest traceable foreign/second language education practises employed translation as the method of instruction. In a typical classroom, teacher

would present a piece of text, rich in literature, in written form to focus on lexical translation, as the sentence structure was explicated through teacher explanation. Any form of second language instruction which included translation in its center has always been termed Grammar-Translation Method (GTM). It was based on the study of Latin, official language of the Roman Empire. At its height of glory, Latin was learnt for its aesthetic value, not necessarily for communication to be used in travel or trade. Therefore, abundant explanations were made for the several of meanings of a word or a phrase. A student was regarded successful if s/he could translate between the first language and the target.

GTM became the standard way of teaching languages in schools in 18th and 19th centuries. It became influential in laying down the foundations of the then classroom practices, which are still in use across the world. This method prioritizes grammar teaching and translation with the emphasis on reading and writing. Vocabulary is taught in lists of isolated words with their equivalents in native language (Brown, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 1987). Translating sentences from and into the target language is the main focus, and students are expected to engage in discussions in their native language. The method gives a high priority to accuracy. Grammar is taught deductively, and a syllabus is followed to teach grammar points in an organized and systematic way. Consequently these applications make reading and writing skills superior to speaking and listening skills in order to get the ability to read and to appreciate the literature of the foreign language. This leads learners to hold a passive role in learning process. Besides, Richards and Rodgers (2001) postulate that there is no document or theoretical background to justify the effectiveness of the method as well as to back up the arguments the method advocates (Brown, 2007). The method lost its popularity with the awareness of the limitations of the method and the need for the ability to communicate in the late 19th century. Now, the method has few advocates, but it has still many adherents in different forms and guises (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Why is this so? It may very well be that when the fashionable methods fail in certain circumstances and contexts, teachers "naturally" turn to GTM, though hardly any teacher would confess such a practice.

The concept of communication as a central tenet in second language education began to emerge in the last decades of the 19th century as language learning became more and more popular, addressing the needs of those who wanted to travel. This is when The

Direct Method, also known as The Natural Method, came into scene. Its practitioners, albeit very small in number, but significant for the history of language teaching, came to a conclusion that the purpose in language teaching should be one of communicating. As a result, the Direct Method arrived as an opposition to the restrictions of GTM at the end of the 19th century. The main point in this method naturally is that no translation is allowed to promote conversation in the classroom, be it between the teacher and students or among the students. In other words, the purpose of language learning is getting the ability to communicate. The grammar is taught inductively unlike the GTM. Put differently, students are not given any specific grammar rules; rather they are expected to work out them from the examples. In addition, learning vocabulary has emphasized over grammar. The syllabus used in this method is based on real life like situations in order to flourish the communication, and students are encouraged to create their own sentences with newly learned vocabularies. This helps students' roles to be less passive.

Besides, the prohibition of the native language was thought to bring some extra linguistic benefits such as getting the ability to converse with native speakers. Accuracy maintains its importance; however, a teacher allows students to make self-correction, as his/ her role was regarded to be as a facilitator for learning. The Direct Method, however, was not implemented worldwide due to the inefficient number of professional teachers and the belief that reading a foreign language is the primary goal of language teaching. Hence, the method stepped aside slowly to the Audiolingual Method, as a result of the new popularity of behaviourist accounts of language learning in the 1920s and 1930s (Harmer, 2007). This important re-orientation had to bring with itself fundamental changes in the practices.

During the World War II, a need for fluent speakers of other languages appeared among military personnel (Griffiths and Parr, 2001). Then linguists developed a new language teaching program based on oral work and drills for military to enable them to communicate in foreign languages (Larsen-Freeman, 1987). This new method attracted the attention of linguists who were already looking for an alternative to GTM. They based the method upon the basis of behaviourist theory. Due to these reasons, the Audiolingual Method came out as a rejection of and an opposition to GTM, especially to its limitations and inefficiency. Behaviourism founded the principals of Audiolingualism following the basic model of stimulus-response-reinforcement, which becomes apparent with drills in

this method. Through stimulus-response-reinforcement basis, the good habits in learners are aimed at being developed, and thus, the method is heavily based on drills to form these habits. That's why, learners are in a passive position; they are programmed to intake the input, as it is believed that the more learners expose to input the more they take in. The communicative competence is thought to be of greater importance than the teaching of grammar or literature in the study of foreign language. Accuracy is regarded as a must; in other words, learners are not allowed to learn anything wrong in case that wrong turns into an undesired habit in learners. For that reason, students were not encouraged to make any contribution to the learning process.

The method reached its peak in the 1960s with the influences of the Behaviourist Theory that made its presence felt especially in the development of Audiolingual Method. However, it was realized that the theoretical basis that it relied upon was unsound and inefficient for placing the gained knowledge in real life context. Besides, the practitioners confessed that it was manipulated the learning process through overloading the students, memorization and mimicry rather than promoting a creative language learning process. All these brought about a decline in application of Audiolingualism in early 1970s, and led linguists to being in search of new ways of teaching approaches. Thus, the language teaching area has become a multidisciplinary field during the period when practitioners were searching for an alternative method to the Audiolingualism, as they realized that they could no longer depend on only linguistic. Rather they did need an eclectic perspective receiving support from education, psychology, anthropology and sociology (Larsen-Freeman, 1987). That's why, the period after the 1970s and 1980s has become a period of 'innovation, experimentation and some confusion' (Richards and Rogers, 2001:67) for language teaching.

Audiolingualism and its theoretical basis of Behaviourism faced many criticisms in this period. The most influential rejection belongs to Noam Chomsky, who argued that the present theories such as Behaviourism, Structuralist Approach and contrastive analysis were not capable of accounting for the basic characteristics of language and thereby language teaching (Lightbown and Spada, 2013), Chomsky (1968) suggested a theory of transformational grammar by which learners generate rules (Griffiths and Parr, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Chomsky argued that learners have the knowledge of abstract rules that enable them to understand and form the sentences that they have never

heard; that's why the language cannot be thought only as a habit formation (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) but a process of cognition, thinking about learning process. Later, it was laid down by some such as Corder (1967) and Selinker (1972) that errors made by the learners represent the underlying linguistic competence and the positive efforts to organize the linguistic competence (Ibid). In other words, errors have been tolerated to some extent unlike the traditional mindset that imposed avoidance from errors on learners. Besides, Krashen's ideas based on the communicative competence introduced by Hymes (1971), contributed to the development of a new approach. Krashen insists on the idea that language cannot be learnt; rather it should be acquired through natural communication (Griffiths and Parr, 2001). This new perspective to language learning leads to the development of Communicative Approach.

Communicative Approach derived from the theory of language as communication (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). It concentrates on the communicative competence and performance rather than teaching grammar points or vocabulary through traditional ways. Communicative competence involves both the ability and the knowledge to use language effectively and appropriately in a social communicative context (Hymes, 1971; Larsen-Freeman, 1987). It encompasses the grammatical knowledge, textual knowledge, functional knowledge and sociocultural knowledge. Communicative competence makes itself visible with communicative performance. According to this approach, exposure to the target language and the access to the opportunities to use the language are fundamental for the development of learners' communicative skills. For that reason, students are made to be involved in real life communication situations that help them achieve the success in their performance. To simulate a real-like atmosphere, authentic materials are frequently used in this method. Unlike other previous methods that prioritized the structure over communication, Communicative Approach focuses on the integration of both functional and structural aspects of language. Many different linguistics forms can be used together for a function. Among the characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is that students work in small groups. Besides, students' errors are tolerated, as error is seen as an indication of linguistic development in the brain. The role of strategy use is emphasized and students are prompted to get strategic competence. The teacher helps learner to make them involve in communicative activities. Learners' attempts are considered as important contributions to creating language. This makes it clear that CLT is

learner centred approach. CLT appeared at a time when a need for a change in language teaching was being highly expected, and it was embraced with enthusiasm. However, the approach began to be viewed critically when the excitement passed, and many pedagogical issues such as teacher training, material development arose with the application of the approach.

The language teaching field, however, has always been dynamic with many methods, approaches and techniques that kept coming and going. Furthermore, influences of Chomsky's theory gave way to the emergence of Cognitive Approach. According to the Cognitive Approach, it was stated that learners were responsible for their own learning, eligible for formulating ways to get the rules of grammar and allowed to make mistakes that represented the underlying cognition in learners. In 1970s, the Cognitive Approach made its presence felt in language teaching methodology in spite of the fact that no specific method developed from it. Under the influences of this approach, there emerged many methods that could not find widespread application areas such as Silent Way, Natural Method, Suggestopoedia, and Total Physical Response. Apart from them, Task Based, Content Based and Participatory Approaches appeared taking communication in the centre of language teaching like CLT. All of these, in some way, have become potent in contemporary language teaching methods.

At the same time, learners' contribution to the learning process began to be valued by the Cognitive Approach proposing that learners are more responsible for their own learning. With this notion, Rubin (1975) suggested that by examining the behaviours of good learners, it may be quite effective to suggest ways (strategies) to the success for poor language learners. The strategies learners apply when learning a foreign language were then thought to be contributions made by learners to the field of language teaching. Since then, learners have been thought to have the ability to consciously influence their own learning. This led a shift from the 'dogmatic positions of wrong or right, better or worse' (Griffiths and Parr, 2001:248) and from a teacher-based learning to learner and learning-centred approach. Thus, many researchers (Rubin, 1975; Oxford, 1990; Chamot and Kupper, 1989) have investigated the role and effects of language learning strategies since 1960s. They have shown that all language learners use strategies in some way and each learner has individual differences in using them. From this perspective, a great deal of research have proved that presenting suitable strategies to learners will help them to

become aware of the ways which they learn most effectively, ways in which they can enhance their own comprehension and production of the target language and ways in which they can continue to learn on their own and communicate in the target language after they leave the language classroom (Cohen, 1998). Besides this new tendency towards the contribution of learners, the researchers have no longer been stick to only a single approach, method or technique; rather an eclectic approach has been taken for granted. Hence, language-learning strategy theory offers a substantial potential for educators and researchers thanks to the teachability of these strategies.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The foreign language teaching mainly consists of four main skill areas, that is to say, reading, listening, speaking, and writing, And for many researchers like Grabe (1999), Mc Donough (2003) and Shaw (2003) reading is the most important among these four skills, especially for those who have to use English as a library language rather than for communication purposes (Rajab et al., 2012). Moreover, it is regarded as one of the most difficult skills to develop to a high level of proficiency, and an important one especially in multilingual, international settings (Grabe, 2002). In earlier researches, reading was regarded an easy bottom-up processing and defined as the identification of written materials and comprehension of the text; however, many studies have proved that reading in second or foreign language is a laborious, demanding and anxiety-provoking task (Koda, 2007; Gorsuch and Taguchi, 2008; Grabe, 2002; Rajab et. al., 2012), because unlike the L1 reading, L2/ FL reading requires the knowledge of spelling patterns, sentence structure, syntax, lexicons and other complex semantic relations of the target language as well as learners' cultural background knowledge (Rajab et. al., 2012:363). Besides, there is an interaction between the target language and the mother language of learners which is in a constant interaction during the process. As a consequence, the reading was redefined as 'the combination of simultaneous bottom-up and top-down processing' (McNeil, 2012:64). Similarly, the definition has been expanded after the studies in second language reading conducted from a psycholinguistic perspective: it is no longer regarded as a process of mouthing of words but requires a series processes such as recognizing the syntactic

relations in a sentence, relations between sentences and making interpretations and inferences by involving the background knowledge (Rajab et. al., 2012).

Many researchers such as Dublin (1982), Rivers (1981), Thiele and Herzic (1983) have repeatedly confirmed that it is reading comprehension which is the most determinant of language learners' success, that is, it the pre-requisite of other skills listening, speaking and writing (Hussein, 2011). In Turkey, in many universities and English departments where medium of instruction is English, it has an utmost importance, as all materials students have to deal with are in English. For that reason, they need to acquire mastery in reading in order to understand and appreciate them. However, it has been observed that students' reading competency at the Department of English Language and Literature at Bingol University is not as higher as expected from EFL university students. This can be attributed to a variety of factors including ineffective use of reading strategies, not well developed teaching methodologies, students' lack of vocabulary, reading motivation, and language learning style. In this study, the effect of language learning strategy on reading comprehension is investigated excluding other factors, as many studies have confirmed a positive relationship between learning strategies and students' reading comprehension (Chang, Liu, and Lee, 2007; Griffiths, 2004; Phakiti, 2003, 2008; Lee, 2010). Besides, it is clear that there is also a scarcity of research in the strategy use in reading and the relationship between learners' preferred strategies and their performance in reading texts, despite the wide range of studies in the domains of language learning strategies as well reading skill in Turkey. Moreover, it has been many times observed that some learners experience great difficulty in understanding academic texts, while others get easily over them and become more successful. When it is taken into consideration that literature students are hand in glove with reading, and they are basically under exposure to English through reading, this comes out as an important problem. No research has been conducted to investigate the relationship between Bingöl University students' learning strategy preferences and their reading comprehension performance in academic context so far. Hence, the purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between Bingöl University students' learning strategy preferences and their reading comprehension performance. It also aims to analyze the use of language learning strategies in accordance with learners' gender, age, and previous English learning experience.

1.3. Significance of the Problem

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between the strategies used by students and their reading comprehension performance. Although many similar studies have been conducted in other countries like Iran (Aghai and Zhang, 2012), China (Lau and Chan, 2007) and Morocco (Mokhtari and Reichard, 2004) where English is spoken as a foreign language, there is a scarcity of research into the relationship between learner's preferred strategies and their performance in reading texts despite the wide range of studies in the domains of language learning strategies as well as in reading skill in Turkey. For this aim, such a study would be an important contribution to the ELT/TEFL studies in Turkey. It is quite clear that the ability to read English efficiently and effectively as a second or foreign language is the most fundamental skill that influences student success at different academic levels. Moreover, the ability to comprehend English well also provides students with better opportunities such as gaining a wide range of knowledge, skills and capabilities to compete in job markets as well as in social and professional settings. Besides, the fact that one of the accessible and easy way to the target language input is through reading makes it quite salient for students. This study, hence, would shed light on which of strategies mostly contribute to the success of students, explaining the influence of key strategies on their reading performance, and would be helpful for pedagogical implications.

1.4. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions respectively:

(a) What language learning strategies do the students utilize most?
(b) What is the relationship between students' use of strategies and reading comprehension performances?
(c) What type of strategies do high-proficiency level students prefer to use?
(d) What type of strategies do low-proficiency level students prefer to use?
(e) Does the inventory of strategy use change with gender?
(f) Does the inventory of strategy use change within age groups?
(g) Does the inventory of strategy use change with the years of English study?

1.5. Limitations of the Study

(a) The research included 140 students of English at the Preparatory School and at the Department of English Language and Literature at Bingöl University. For this reason, it is only possible to generalize the results of the study to the same programs of other universities only to some extent.

(b) The study took gender, grade, and proficiency level as independent variables. However, researches suggest that certain individual variables also affect language learning (such as motivation, learning styles, and attitude). These variables go beyond the scope of this study; therefore, they are excluded from the study.

(c) The study is based on reading success of students in determining their proficiency, taking into account the fact that reading is essential for this study and hence extracting other three basic skills speaking, writing and listening.

1.6. Operational Definitions

Language Learning Strategies: Learning strategies are regarded as the actions, tools, attempts or techniques that learners consciously or unconsciously apply to assist their own learning in order to promote autonomy, to acquire knowledge and to regulate their learning (Oxford, 1990; O'Marley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 2003; Mouton, 2011; Rubin, 1975; Griffiths, 2013).

SILL: It is the 50-item version of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) for EFL learners.

Reading Comprehension Test: A 24-questions standard reading comprehension test including two passages taken from Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL by Deborah Phillips (2007).

1.7. Conclusion and Overview of Forthcoming Chapters

In this chapter, background for the study, the problem, and purpose of the study were described. The research questions were also listed as well as operational definitions that will be used in this study. Moreover, limitations of the study were provided for a better

evaluation of findings in the study. In Chapter 2, a review of empirical researches around the world in the field will be presented in addition to offering of the concepts of language learning strategies and reading broadly, and studies that have been done primarily on reading are cited across the world. Chapter 3 offers a detailed description of the methodology. Firstly, the rationale for choosing the specific instrumentations (Reading Comprehension Test and Oxford's SILL) for data collection is presented in addition to the description of them. The educational setting for the study is described, and data analysis procedures are depicted. Chapter 4 reports findings and results of the quantitative and qualitative data collected in Reading Comprehension Test and in Oxford's SILL. Chapter 5 discusses the important findings and results according to the test and questionnaire, providing a conclusion and implications for future researches.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reveals the theoretical background information about the topics that were discussed in this study. First of all, the language learning strategies is discussed in detail, addressing the classification of the strategies, and variables affecting the strategy use. Then, the reading skill is presented in relation to strategies as well as the procceses in reading and influencial variables on reading comprehension of learners. Lastly, related studies on strategy use in development of reading skill in foreign language learning settings are examined.

2.1. Cognitive Learning Theory and Language Learning Strategies (LLSs)

Although L2 and FL have not offered their own theories of language acquisition until recently (Celik, 2009), some theories of second language acquisition based on L1 acquisition theories have been offered to account for the second language acquisition and its development. These theories (Behaviourism, Innatist, Cognitive and Sociocultural Theories) give, in some respects, insights into language teaching studies, in spite of the fact that there is no a complete agreement on which theory explains the whole process of second language acquisition (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). Here, cognitive theories will be described in as much length as necessary to place the language learning strategies into perspective. However, in the first place, behaviourist and innatist perspectives will be briefly explained in order to perceive the foundations of cognitive theories.

Behaviourism which dominated second and foreign language teaching across the world, especially in North America, from 1940s to 1970s (Lightbown and Spada, 2013), explains the second language learning as the habit formation (which is thought to be achieved through imitation and practice) based on the stimulus-response-reinforcement

model (Lightbown and Spada, 2013; Celik, 2009; Ellis, 1994). Studies within the behaviourist perspective were mostly conducted in laboratories with animals, and strangely enough learning process of animals was found to be valid for humans too. For instance, Skinner (1957) regards language nothing much more than behaviour (Tomasello, 1998). Besides, language learning was considered to be within the capacity of all people through forming association between stimulus and response system. The influences of this theory can be clearly seen with the practices of Audiolingual Method, which is seen a direct result of behaviourism (Celik, 2009). As a result, mimicry, repetition, memorization and reinforcement are emphasized in classroom activities and dialogues. Moreover, sentences are learnt by heart. This approach to second language teaching advocates the superiority of environmental factors over learners, and the learner is a passive receiver of information. However, studies which have been done from the perspective of Chomsky's Universal Grammar (UG) led to the rejection of behaviourists explanations of language learning and by 1970s behaviourism was not seen efficient to provide a thoroughly satisfactory account of language learning.

Chomsky's critique of behaviourism led him to propose UG for explaining the L1 acquisition. According to this view, also known as Nativism, everyone brings an innate faculty that enable them to speak a language (Celik, 2009). Although Chomsky did not express any explanation for second language acquisition, innatist scholars (e.g. Lydia White, 2003) argue that principals of UG makes it quite clear for understanding the second language acquisition (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). However, 'the critical period' (the argument put forward by Chomsky that all children acquire their mother tongue within a critical period of their development) led to disagreement among scientists. Those who disagree suggest that UG cannot explain second language acquisition especially for those who passed their critical period even if it is still regarded to be best framework for L1 acquisition. Studies done under the influence of Chomsky led to development of Cognitive Psychology, because of the narrowness of UG to explain social and cognitive dimensions of language learning (Tomasello, 1998).

In contrast to behaviourism, Cognitive Approach deals with how human mind perceives, retains, orders and retrieves the input they take in. This approach tries to make it clear how psychological mechanism of human mind automatically comprehends and produces as well as how it develops the competence (Kaplan, 2002). It supports that

learning is the outcome of our efforts to understand what goes on around us via the mental tools that we already have. According to this view, there is no difference in learning L1 and L2 (Celik, 2009; Lightbown and Spada, 2013), however, L2 learners have already the knowledge of language, and naturally it forms their perception of L2. In this approach, learners are not passive receivers of input, rather they both responds and organize the input. They interpret and make efforts to comprehend what they have just received through their past experiences, current knowledge and primarily their pre-existing cognitive structures (Mouton, 2011). O'Malley and Chamot (1990) state that Cognitive Theory proposes:

> ''individuals are said to *process* information, and the thoughts involved in this cognitive activity are referred to as *mental processes*. Learning strategies are special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information'' (1).

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), language learning strategies are ways that we process the information to understand the input. For that reason, they are of great importance for the research area.

Language learning strategies depend primarily on three models of Cognitive Learning Theory: Information Processing, Schema Theory and Constructivism. These models form the onset of learning strategies that help learners to more autonomy in their learning activities. A brief overview of the three models helps a better understanding of how they are related to the language learning strategies.

In Information Processing model of human learning and performance, learners uses means to make goal-oriented systematic responses to the conditions in the environment. This model regards the language as the collecting and retrieval of the knowledge when needed for comprehension or production. Strategies such as summarizing, inferencing and predicting are regarded to be connected to this model of cognitive approach (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Schema Theory indicates that earlier knowledge enables us to comprehend and organize the newly gained knowledge. According to this model, we add new information to the structures in our mind called schemata collecting information based on our past experiences and helping us to make associations between pre-existing knowledge and new knowledge. Drawing inferences, making predictions, and creating summaries are strategies directly associated with this theory. The third model of Cognitive Theory

Constructivism proposes that learner constructs information and forms his own subjective mental representations based on his pre-existing knowledge. According to this view, learning process is an active and subjective process, as they build up information by making associations with newly gained and pre-existing knowledge. Learners are also encouraged to get the ability to plan and monitor their learning process by gaining strategic competence rather than forming habits. Metacognitive strategies, according to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), are involved in this theory.

With the influences of cognitive theories, which advocates the subjective construction of knowledge based on past experiences, centre of teaching system have become students whose contributions have been valued. The shift from teacher-centred approach to a student-centred one led the learners to become the centre of education systems since the late 1960s and early 1970s. Since then, great deals of studies have been conducted on individual differences in EFL and ESL learners (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002). This shift has also led to the studies on language learning strategies (one of variables of individual differences) becoming a central concern of pedagogical area (Radwan, (2011). However, it was Rubin's seminal article 'what the good language learner can teach us' in 1975 that first made the concept of language learning strategies focus of interest among scholars (Griffiths, 2013; Sadighi and Zarafshan, 2006; Mouton, 2011). Rubin investigates the relationship between the high success of good language learners and their strategies (Mouton, 2011). Then, many researchers such as O'Malley et al. (1985), O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have been conducted describing the learners' profiles of second and foreign language learners and the strategic techniques they use. According to Williams and Burden (1997), it is cognitive psychology that helped the area to be developed (Hismanoglu, 2000). The studies beginning with defining or describing have turned to explore to what extent the language learning strategies become influential to produce more effective learners in recent years.

2.2. Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) Definition

Before defining the concept of language learning strategies, it would be clarifying to define what strategy is. The term *strategy* has been used in the literature for centuries; however, there have been still confusions about the definition and usage of it (Griffiths,

2004), because, it has been constantly confused with skill or tactic. To begin with skill, Psaltou-Joycey (2010) defines skill as the abilities that prossesses enabling her to perform a task easily and fast. In Online Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, it is defined as 'the ability to do something well'. The definitons made so far emphasize that skills are linked to *the ability*.

The second term *tactic*, which is confused with strategy more often than skill, is defined as tools to achieve the success of strategies (Oxford, 1990). As for the word *strategy*, it derives from the ancient Greek word 'strategia' meaning steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war (Oxford, 2003). Today, the word is used not only for the war situations but also for everything that is meant to be achieved (Oxford, 1990, 2003). In Online Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, strategy is a plan/a process of planning that is intended to achieve a goal and carrying out a task/ the plan skilfully. From an educational point of view, Urquhart and Weir (1998) and Afflerbach et al. (2008) state that strategies are the actions that we adopt to reach a goal and have been used mostly to refer to the cognitive processes such as rehearsal, imagery and rendering the whole process more learner-centred (Manoli and Papadopoulou, 2012).

There are many definitions of language learning strategies available in the literature, although it is thought to be difficult to define strategies specifically and they were described as *fuzzy* (Ellis, 1994:529) and *elusive* (Wenden and Rubin, 1987:7). To begin with, Wenden and Rubin (1987) define LLSs as the techniques, steps, tools that learners make use of in order to contribute to the development of language system and to facilitate their own learning (Chang, Liu and Lee, 2007). Cohen (2003), realizing that strategies can be consciously applied, defined language learning strategies as 'the conscious or semi conscious thoughts and behaviours used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and understanding of a target language' (2).

Oxford (1990) offered the most comprehensive and current definition of language learning strategies. According to her, streategies are 'specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations' (8). Later, with Hsiao, she (2002:369) focused on the cognitive aspects of strategies, and they described strategies as operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information. Stern (1992) described strategies as the intentional directions and techniques that learners consciously

apply to their learning activities to achieve certain goals (Hismanoglu, 2000). Another researcher Chamot (2004:14) states that learning strategies are 'the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take in order to achieve a learning goal'. Faerch Claus and Casper (1983) made a definition of LLSs from a different point of view, stating that language learning strategies are the attempts that learners do in trying to manage to obtain linguistic and sociolinguistics competence (Hismanoglu, 2000). Weinstein and Mayer (1986:315) have also proposed a definition for LLSs stating that, LLSs are 'behaviours or thoughts that a learner engages in during learning that are intended to influence the learner's encoding process' (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002).

It is clear that there are many definitions of LLSs in the literature; each of them has an emphasis on certain aspects of them. A comprehensive definition, however, should be made regarding the previously made ones: in a simple and broad term, learning strategies are regarded as the actions, tools, attempts or techniques that learners consciously or unconsciously apply to assist their own learning in order to promote autonomy, to acquire knowledge and to regulate their learning (Oxford, 1990; O'Marley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 2003; Mouton, 2011; Rubin, 1975; Griffiths, 2013).All these definitions emphasize certain aspects of LLSs, and Oxford (1990) has united them together and identified certain characteristics of LLSs as follows:

Language learning strategies;

- Are specific actions taken by learners.
- Can be taught.
- Expand the role of teacher.
- Are flexible.
- Are often conscious as the term *strategy* itself implies a conscious movement towards a goal (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002).
- Are problem-oriented, that is, learners use them intentionally and consciously control them.
- Help learners to be more self-directed (learner autonomy).
- Support learners' learning directly and indirectly.
- Are influenced by a variety of factors.
- Contribute to the communicative competence of learners, which is the main goal of FL teaching.

- Are not always observable.

- Involve many aspects of the learners, not just the cognitive.

Grenfell and Harris (1999) highlights the importance of learning strategies especially for less successful learners as a supporting tool to their learning to be become better language learners (Mouton, 2011). Chamot (2001) defines two main goals of researches on learning strategies. The first one entails identifying and comparing the strategies which high and low proficiency language learners utilize. Secondly, the low level learners should be given an instruction to reach a certain proficiency level and to become more successful (Radwan, 2011).

Allwright (1990) and Little (1991) have shown that learning strategies help students to be more independent and autonomous learners (Oxford, 2003). Similarly, Oxford (2003) argues that strategy use enables learning process to be more effective, enjoyable and self-directed, if the strategy used by the learners '(a) relates well to the L2 task at hand, (b) fits the particular student's learning style preferences to one degree or another, and (c) if the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies' (8).

2.3. Taxonomy of LanguageLearning Strategies

Considerable researches on language learning strategies have not produced uncontroversial data to make a specific classification and enumeration of language learning strategies. In other words, the number of strategies and how to categorize them have not been prescribed yet (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002). Still, there have been many attempts by some scholars such as Rubin (1981), Brown and Palinscar (1982), O'Marley (1985), Dansereau (1985), Oxford (1990), Stern (1992) and Cohen (2000) to propose some categorizations of language learning strategies based on criteria sometimes contrasting and sometimes overlapping in some respects (Hismanoglu, 2000; Liu, 2010). That fuzziness causes teachers and researchers to be confused of which of these categorizations should be followed. However, the most preferred and generally accepted in pedagogical researches and educational settings one belongs to Rebecca Oxford (1990). Here, some classifications made are presented.

2.3.1. Rubin's (1987) Classification

In her previous attempt, Rubin made a distinction between strategies contributing directly and strategies contributing indirectly to learning such as creating opportunities for practice and production tricks (Griffiths, 2013; Liu, 2010; Lee, 2010; Hismanoğlu, 2000; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). After, Rubin (1987) proposed that there are three major groups of strategies that learners use: social strategies, communication strategies and learning strategies as illustrated in the figure below.

Social strategies are indirectly contributing to the development of language learning although they provide learners to be exposed to the target language. These strategies help learners to be engaged in activities to practice their knowledge. Social strategies include asking native speakers/teachers/fellow students questions in order to initiate conversations, and also listening to the media, etc.

Communication strategies are based on the processes of participating in a conversation, getting the speaker clarifying the intended message and making the addressee comprehend what is said (Griffiths, 2013; Liu, 2010; Hismanoğlu, 2000). They can be useful to be applied when the speaker faces a difficulty in understanding due to various reasons.
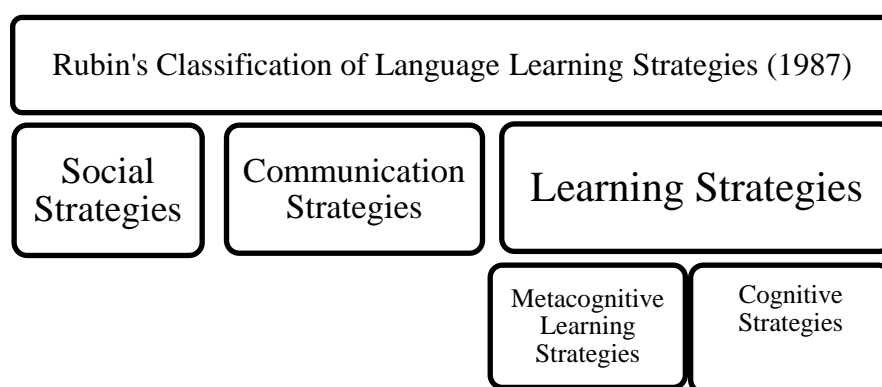
Figure 2.3.1.1. Rubin's Classification of Language Learning Strategies (1987)

Learning strategies are stated to 'contribute to the development of language system... and affect learning directly' (Rubin, 1987:23). There are two subcategories of learning strategies: cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies. Cognitive learning strategies

included six types of strategies: clarification/verification, monitoring, memorisation, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning and practice (Griffiths, 2013; Lee, 2010). Metacognitive learning strategies help learners to regulate and manage their own learning activities. This strategy group involves various processes such as setting goals, prioritising and self-management.

2.3.2. Wenden's (1983) Classification

Wenden's categorization focuses on the adult learners' strategies that they use to manage their own learning (Liu, 2010). Therefore, she emphasized on the selfdirecting strategies and divided them into three groups:

    a. Knowing about knowledge and relating to what language and language learning involves;

    b. Planning relating to the 'what' and 'how' of language learning;

    c. Self-evaluation. It involves the progress in learning and how learners react to the learning experiences.

2.3.3. O'Marley's (1990) Classification

O'Marley, Chamot and his colleagues attempted to produce a categorization schema of language learning strategies. They identified 26 strategies based on the data collected from interviews with experts and novices and theoretical analyses of reading comprehension and problem solving. He further divided the learning strategies into three main groups: metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective strategies. It is the same categorization that Brown and Palinscar (1982) made. Moreover, there is a parallelism between O' Marley's metacognitive and cognitive strategies groups and Rubin's indirect and direct strategies; however, O' Marley expanded his frame by adding the social strategy group (Griffiths, 2013).
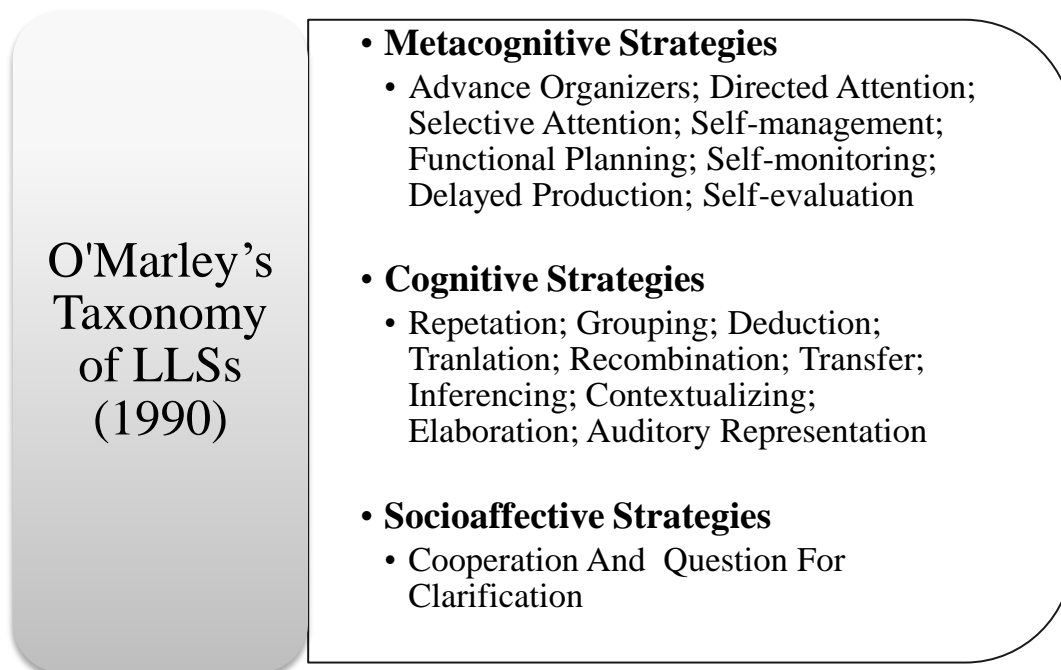
Figure 2.3.3.1. O'Marley's Classification of Language Learning Strategies (1990)

According to O'Marley, metacognitive strategies involve knowing about learning and controlling learning through planning, monitoring, and evaluating the learning activity (Liu, 2010). The group includes strategies such as controlling the learning process, advance organizers, directed attention, functional planning, selective attention and self-management. Metacognitive strategies also involve checking, verifying, or correcting one's comprehension or performance in the course of language task, checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against a standard after it has been completed.

Cognitive strategies are not so comprehensive. In other words, they are restricted to specific learning tasks and they involve more direct manipulation or transformation of the learning material itself (Hismanoğlu, 2000). Resourcing, repetition, grouping, recombination, translation, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, key word method, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, inferencing and summarizing can be mentioned as the most important cognitive strategies (Liu, 2010; Hismanoğlu, 2000).

As for *socio-affective strategies*, they are mainly related to the learner's communicative interaction with another person and social-mediating activity. Cooperation and question for clarification are the main socio-affective strategies. For instance, learners

collaborate with their peers in problem-solving exercises or ask for explanations for the things that they face difficulty in understanding.

2.3.4. Stern's (1992) Classification

Stern has listed five main categories of LLSs as follows:

    a.   Management and planning strategies

    b.   Cognitive strategies

    c.   Communicative-experiential strategies

    d.   Interpersonal strategies

    e.   Affective strategies

Management and planning strategies are those that specify learner's intention to direct his own learning. To put it in another way, a learner can be responsible for controlling of the development of his own programme when he is helped by a teacher. For that reason, Stern (1992) noted that the learner should 'decide what commitment to make to language learning, set reasonable goals, decide on an appropriate methodology, select appropriate resources, and monitor progress, evaluate his achievement in the light of previously determined goals and expectations' (263).

Stern's grouping of *cognitive strategies* includes Rubin's six types of cognitive strategies. According to Stern, cognitive strategies are related to steps or operations used in learning or problem solving. These strategies are used for direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. Some of the cognitive strategies are presented below:

- Clarification / Verification
- Guessing / Inductive Inferencing
- Deductive Reasoning
- Practice
- Memorization
- Monitoring

Communication strategies are techniques learners make use of in order to keep a conversation going or as Stern (1992) reveal 'to avoid interrupting the flow of communication' (263). Circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase, or asking for repetition and explanation can be listed among this group strategy.

Interpersonal strategies refer to learners' monitoring and making evaluation of their own development and performance. It includes the necessity of making contact with native speakers and being familiar with the target culture.

Affective strategies are set of actions performed by learners to overcome the negative feelings evoked in them towards the target language and consequently towards activities to learn that language, taking into account learning a foreign language can be difficult and challenging for learners. For instance, the feeling of strangeness evoked by the foreign language and negative feelings about native speakers of L2 are examples of emotional problems. Stern proposes (1992) that 'learning training can help students to face up to the emotional difficulties and to overcome them by drawing attention to the potential frustrations or pointing them out as they arise' (266).

2.3.5. Oxford's (1990) Classification

Of all classifications, Rebecca Oxford (1990) has made the most comprehensive hierarchy of learning strategies to date in the area of language learning strategies. Oxford's model of strategy classification consists of two main categorizations as direct and indirect strategies with subgroups under each main group.

2.3.5.1. Direct Strategies

Strategies in this group directly influence development of language learning, that is, they involve direct learning and use of the subject matter. This group involve memory, cognitive and compensation strategies, which are explained in detail below.

Memory strategies refer to remembering (e.g. visualising and using flash cards) and retrieving new information. These strategies enbale learners to learn and retrieve information quick when it is needed, but do not necessarily provide them with deep understanding. According to Oxford (1990), 'storage and retrieval of new information are the key functions of memory strategies' (58). Learners use techniques such as laying things out in order, making association, reviewing, creating mental linkages and employing actions, a passageway for the information into long-term memory and retrieving information in order. Grouping, imagery, rhyming, structured reviewing, acronyms, the

keyword method, mechanical means (e.g., flashcards), or location (e.g., on a page or blackboard) can be listed among examples of memory strategies (Oxford, 2003:13). The figure 4 shows the grouping of memory strategies:
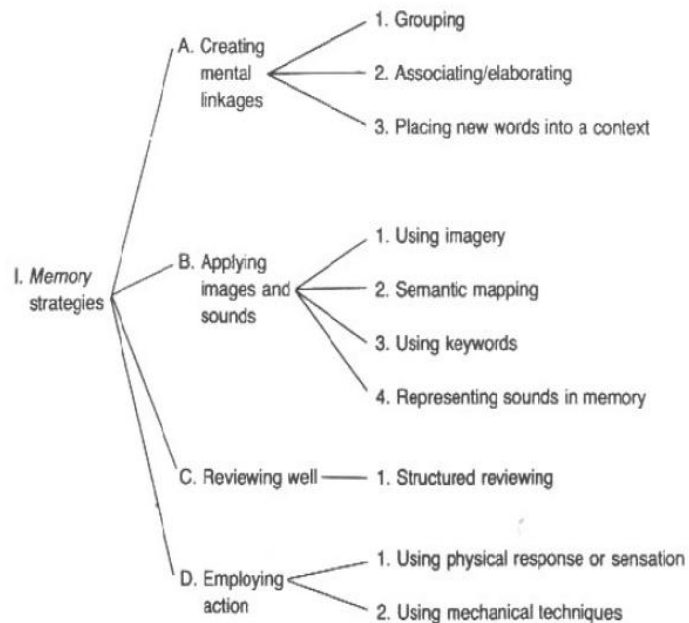
Figure 2.3.5.1.1. Grouping of Memory Strategies by Oxford (1990:18)

A student, for instance, makes use of one of these techniques to remember a word that he finds difficult to remember. The meaning of the word may be used to create a mental picture that can be stored and retrieved when the student needs. Learners of foreign language at beginning stages tend to use memory strategies more than those at higher level of proficiency. The use of memory strategies decreases when the learners' storage of vocabulary, phrases and grammatical structures becomes larger.

Cognitive strategies for understanding and producing the language are the most popular strategies among language teaching environment, as it is directly involved in language learning. Many scholars conducted researches on studying the relationship between cognitive strategies and L2/FL learning such as Ku (1995), Oxford, Judd, and Giesen (1998-carried out in Turkey), Park (1994), Kato (1996) and Oxford and Ehrman (1995) (Oxford, 1990). There are four sets of strategies included in this group: practicing, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output, which are shown in the figure below:

Figure 2.3.5.1.2. Grouping of Cognitive Strategies by Oxford (1990:19)

According to Oxford (2003), this group helps learners

'to manipulate the language material in direct ways, e.g., through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas (knowledge structures), practicing in naturalistic settings, and practicing structures and sounds formally' (12).

All these represent the deep processing in the brain.

Compensation Strategies, for using the language despite lack of knowledge, are used by learners to compensate for the missing knowledge when a language task is beyond their reach, to make up for their incompetency in the target language so as to continue the communication. Compensation strategies are often called as communication strategies. Among this group, there are strategies such as guessing unknown words while listening and reading or using circumlocution in speaking and writing. Strategy grouping is demonstrated in the figure below:

```
                                              1. Using linguistic clues
                       A. Guessing
                          intelligently        2. Using other clues

                                              1. Switching to the mother tongue

      III. Compensation                        2. Getting help
           strategies
                                              3. Using mime or gesture

                                              4. Avoiding communication partially or totally
                       B. Overcoming
                          limitations          5. Selecting the topic
                          in speaking
                          and writing          6. Adjusting or approximating the message

                                              7. Coining words

                                              8. Using a circumlocution or synonym
```

Figure 2.3.5.1.3. Grouping of compensation strategies by Oxford (1990:19)

The strategy guessing-from-context was subsumed under compensation strategies, as it is essential for compensation of lacked knowledge in reading and listening (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002).

2.3.5.2. Indirect Srategies

Indirect strategies are supporting elements of language learning; however, these strategies are not involved in the language use directly. Direct and indirect strategies are collaborating in helping learners to regulate the learning process by supporting and managing language learning without direct engagement (or involvement). This group includes metacognitive, affective and social strategies.

Metacognitive Strategies are specified as behaviours that coordinate the learning process and help learners to regulate their learning through planning, arranging, focusing, and evaluating. Oxford and Crookall (1989) state that metacognitive strategies are beyond the cognitive strategies, and they provide 'excessive control over the learning process' (404). Metacognitive strategies involves identifying one's own learning style preferences and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and evaluating the success of any type of

learning strategy (Oxford, 2003). The figure 7 shows the grouping of metacognitive strategies:
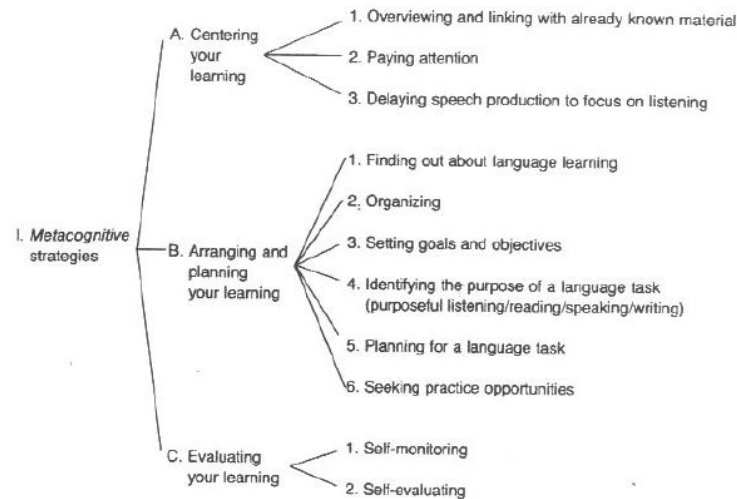
Figure 2.3.5.2.1. Grouping of Metacognitive Stratgeies by Oxford (1990:20)

Purpura (1999) proposes that metacognitive strategies have an excessive function over task completion (Oxford, 2003).

   Affective Strategies are motivation-related techniques that help learners to manage and control her emotions, feelings and motivational states (Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995; Hsiao and Oxford, 2002). Regulating emotions such as identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive self-talk enable learners to control feelings such as confidence, motivations, and attitudes related to language learning. Figure below presents this group strategy:
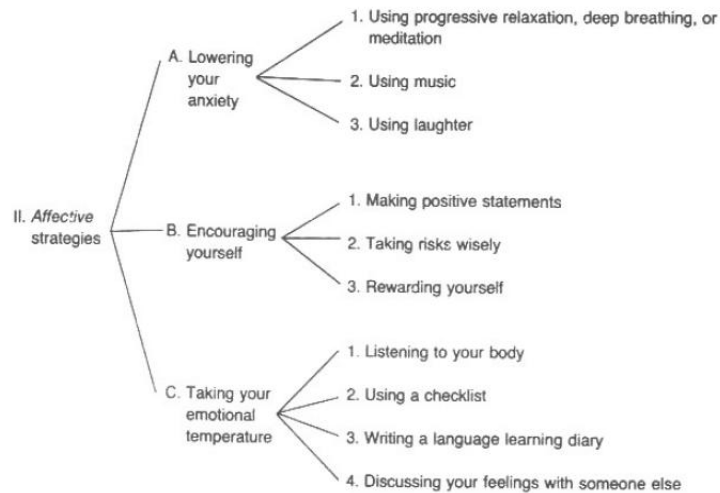
Figure 2.3.5.2.2. Grouping of Affective Strategies by Oxford (1990:21)

Social Strategies are techniques that involve learning with others. These group strategies facilitate interaction with others, often in a discourse situation. In contrast to O'Malley and Chamot who made a small group for affective and social strategies by combining both social and affective strategies as socio-affective, Oxford divided them into two separate groups. Because, Oxford holds the opinion of that both groups should receive utmost attention as part of the 'whole learner' (Hsiao and Oxford, 2002:372). This group involves strategies such as asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, cooperation with others, conversing with a native-speaker, and exploring cultural and social norms. Strategies belonging to this group are shown below:

Figure 2.3.5.2.3. Grouping of social strategies by Oxford (1990:21)

2.3.6. Cohen's (2000) Classification

Cohen (2000) defines language learning strategies as process that learners apply consciously to improve their knowledge of target language. He divides strategies into four groups as listed below (Liu, 2010).

Cognitive Strategies: This group involves comprehension and production of learned material, grouping, storing, retrieval and retention.

Metacognitive Strategies: These strategies are related to planning, organizing, controlling and evaluation of language learning activities. They help learners to manage their own learning process.

Affective Strategies: Learners make use of these strategies to control their emotions, attitudes and motivation. They apply affective strategies, for instance, to reduce their anxiety or to motivate themselves or for self-encouragement.

Social Strategies: These strategies are used by learners to interact with their peers/teacher/fellow students and native speakers. Social strategies also involve asking for clarification and cooperation.

2.4. Variables Afecting Language Learning Strategies

Studies in language learning strategies have tended to list the good language learner behaviours underlying the importance of using a good repertoire of strategies. In contrast, Porte (1988) and Vann and Abraham (1990) found out that unsuccessful learners in fact made use of a good deal of strategies (Griffiths, 2013). This proves that it is not only the number of strategies but it is also of great importance to select appropriate strategies for their needs and the ability to harmonize them for the task they deal with or for any context in order to produce desired outcome and to achieve success. Therefore, it can be restated that good language learners make use of their strategy repertoire accordance with their needs and goals; and their choice of these strategies is inevitably affected by many factors. Many studies have investigated to what extend these various factors influence students' choice of language learning strategies. Most commonly examined factors are age, language being learned, level of language learning/proficiency, degree of metacognitive awareness, sex, attitude/beliefs motivation, aptitude, task requirements, national origin, teacher

expectation, learning styles, specific individual differences and overall personality types, cultural differences, type of strategy training, years of English study and language teaching methods (Rubin, 1975; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989; Oxford, 1990; Liu, 2010; Lee, 2010; Sadighi and Zarafshan, 2006).

Some of these factors that influence the learner's choice of strategy use will be explained briefly as follows:

2.4.1. Motivation

Motivation is one of the most frequently investigated issues in language learning studies. Hence, there are many definitions of motivation posited in the literature available, each of which emphasizes a certain aspect of motivation. Williams and Robert Burden (1997:120) define the term as 'the state of cognitive arousal' that provokes to decide to act physically or intellectually and as a result make an effort in order to achieve the previously set goals (Harmer, 2007). Rod Ellis (1997:75) states 'motivation involves the attitudes and the affective states that influence the degree of efforts that learners make to learn an L2'. Another scholar Gardner (1985:10), pioneer of motivation studies, points out that motivation is the 'combination of efforts plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language' (Khodashenas et al., 2013).

Various kinds of motivation have been proposed so far: extrinsic (instrumental), intrinsic, integrative and resultative motivation. Extrinsic motivation emerges from an outside factor such as a financial reward, passing an exam or winning a scholarship (Ellis, 1997; Harmer, 2007). Intrinsic motivated learners, on the other hand, may find themselves in learning activities, or may involve in these activities as a result of their desire to learn an L2 (Ellis, 1997; Sadighi and Zarafshan, 2006; Harmer, 2007). Resultative motivation is postulated to be the cause of the success in L2. Lastly, integrative motivation comes from a desire to be interacting with native speakers of the target language or to be familiar with the culture of that language (Griffiths, 2013; Ellis, 1997).

A great deal of studies (e.g. Gardner, 1985; Garner and MacIntyre, 1991) has demonstrated that there is a positive correlation between motivation and the success and motivation is shown to be a strong determinant in language learning (Khodashenas et al.,

2013). Likewise, the same correlation is expected to prevail in strategy research as well. In other words, it is proposed that more motivated students tend to use more strategies than less motivated students. In their study, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) demonstrated that motivation had a profound effect on student's reports of strategy use. According to them, motivation is the primary influencial factor on strategy arguing that highly motivated learners use more strategies than the less motivated ones. On top of that, they observed that high use of strategies also leads high motivation:

'...we would expect that use of appropriate strategies leads to enhanced actual and perceived proficiency, which in turn creates high self-esteem, which leads to strong motivation, spiralling to still more use of strategies, great actual and perceived proficiency, high self-esteem, improved motivation, and so on.' (295).

Their argument indicates that motivation directly affects the utilization of language learning strategies.

2.4.2. Gender

Gender differences in learners' strategy use have been thought to be an influential factor. Gender role on learner's choice of strategy has been examined in many studies such as Hashemi (2011), Rahimi, Riazi and Saif (2008), Oxford and Nyikos (1989), Ehrman and Oxford (1988, 1989), and Martinez (2008). In their study, Oxford and Nyıkos (1989), for instance, reported that female students use certain groups of strategies more than males, although males surpass females in using certain type of strategies. Similarly, in a part of an exploratory research conducted by Ehrman and Oxford (1989), women were found to use more strategies than men (Griffiths, 2013). However, other studies such as Tran (1988) are disputing this finding, and it has been proven, in some cases male learners surpass females. Tran found out that Vietnamese males used more strategies than women (Hashemi, 2011). On the other hand, there are studies that report no significant relationship between strategy use and gender (Rahimi, Riazi and Saif, 2008).

2.4.3. Cultural Background

It is claimed by some scholars such as Oxford (1996), Levine, Reves, and Leaver (1996), Sung (2011) that learning is situated within a certain cultural background, and naturally it is partly affected by cultural norms, values and perceptions (Dörnyei, 2005). In the study conducted by Levine, Reves, and Leaver (1996) in Israel, which aimed at comparing strategy preference of immigrant students and students living in Israel for at least five years, it has been found out that there is an appreciable difference in their preferences (Dörnyei, 2005). Immigrant students are disposed to prefer memorizing grammar rules, repeatedly writing down word, and doing exercises in textbooks, while the latter group tend to choose communicative approaches and attempt to use newly learned structures and words (Dörnyei, 2005). Similarly, Bedell and Oxford (1996) have also supported the idea in their review of strategy use in many ethno-linguistic contexts that language learners are partly, not always, under the influence of culturally and socially approved norms and learning ways (Dörnyei, 2005). Another study was conducted by Sung (2011) examining the factors that were thought to be influential on Chinese students' strategy use. He found out that cultural background had an affect on learners' strategy use and choice. According to his study, learners who were non-heritage language learners were surprisingly found to use metacognitive, affective and social strategies more frequently than those who were Chinese heritage language learners. Nevertheless, it is not true to think that students cannot behave beyond the cultural limits in their learning activities, although cultural background is reported to have considerable effect on strategy use of language learners

2.4.4. Level of Proficiency

Although the level of proficiency has become the mostly examined factor that is thought to be influential on strategy use, studies in the literature offered controversial results related to the relationship between strategy use and the degree of learners' proficiency. On one hand, some studies such as Park (1997), Griffiths (2007), Yıldırım and Akcaoglu (2012), Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) have reported that there is a significant relationship between strategy use and proficiency level of learners. Griffiths (2007), for

instance, proved in her study that higher level students reported using a larger repertoire of strategies more frequently than lower level students. Similarly, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) have confirmed that skilled readers are more successful at applying the cognitive and metacognitive strategies in academic reading texts (Nergis, 2013).

On the other hand, there are studies such as Porte (1988), Vann and Abraham (1990), which showed that strategy uses has an insignificant relation to proficiency level of learners (Griffiths, 2013). In his study carried out in London on 15 poor adolescent learners, Porte (1988) found no significant difference among these learners when compared to good language learners (Ibid). Another study that produced controvercal results belongs to Vann and Abraham (1990). They conducted a study on two women who were reported to use a large quantity of strategies although they failed to make any progress in their language competency as their TOEFL scores indicated.

2.4.5. Attitudes/Beliefs

Some studies examined the relationship between strategies and attitudes such as Yang (1993), Horwitz (1988), Oxford (1989), Hassanpur (1999) and Sedathag (2001). Although Howitz (1988:283) conducted a study examining the influence of learner's belief on aptitude, language learning difficulties, the nature of language learning, motivation and strategies, he, then, concluded 'Although student's belief about language learning would seem to have obvious relevance to the understanding of students expectations of, commitment to, success in, and satisfaction with their language courses, they have remained relatively unexplored' (Griffiths, 2013). On the other hand, White (2008), Ehrmann and Oxford (1989, 1990) agree with the fact that good language learners are not those who have beliefs, rather they develop a sense of confidence in themselves and insights about the language they are learning, leaning process and the use of learning strategies (Griffiths, 2013). Another scholar Yang (1993) has found a positive correlation between students' positive attitude towards target language and the use of strategies. In contrast, Hassanpour (1999) could not find any significant difference in students' strategy use between those having negative attitudes and those having positive attitudes towards target language. Sedagat's study (2001) has showed that use of certain group of strategies

(metacognitive, cognitive, memory, compensation and social) is more common among those who have positive attitudes.

2.4.6. Age

Studies on the age factor over the success of learners have not been deprived of controversy. Some of them argue that young learners are better than older ones at language learning while there are studies in literature that demonstrate the presence of more successful adult learners. However, it has been proved that young learners develop phonological skill much better than adults, whereas adult make a better progress in learning morphology.

Age-based differences are said to be due to socio-affective and cognitive variables. Ellis (1986), Burling (1981) and Schumann (1976) argue that adults tend to be open to bound by cultural changes than young learners, hence, the possibility of a cultural shock is greater for adults, or they may feel inefficient for learning a language (Griffiths, 2013). However, scientists such as Krashen (1985), Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1978) proved that adults are cognitively superior to young learners, as they are capable of reasoning, getting more comprehensible input and negotiating to communicate (Ibid). That is why they make greater progress in language learning when compared to young learners (Ibid). Regarding these views, Griffiths (2013) proposes:

> 'More mature students might also be expected to have a larger and well-established strategy repertoire from which they can select and orchestrate appropriate learning activities to regulate their own learning. In addition, older students might be expected to be able to exercise better metacognitive control over their learning, for instance, by means of time management, and by planning, monitoring and evaluating their own progress.' (25)

According to this point of view, older learners are expected to have a larger repertoire of strategy compared to younger ones.

2.4.7. Learning Style

Learning style is well reported that it is another determiner of language learning strategy use. In one of these studies, Ko (2002) investigated the relationship between Thawainese students' learning styles preferences and their strategy preferences. The study has been based on Oxford's SILL and Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire, which depend upon five modalities, that is, visual, auditory, tactile (learning by touching), kinaesthetic and individual versus group preference (Griffiths, 2013). He has found out that there is no significant difference among students with different learning styles and their strategy choice. Moreover, he reported that kinesthetic learners were found out to use more memory, compensation and social strategies than other style learners. Visual and multiple style groups have been stated to use affective strategies than the other groups.

2.4.8. Years of English Study

The relationship between years of English study and language learning strategy use has become a research topic among scholars such as Rahimi et al. (2008), Oxford and Nyikos (1989) and Yalçın (2006). Some studies reported a significant effect of years of English study on strategy use, while there are studies that showed no relationship between them.

In their study, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) stated that according to the responces of 1200 foreign language student, generally speaking duration of language study had a profound effect on language strategy use of learners. They demonstrated that students who were experienced at least five years used certain type of strategies more often than less experienced ones. In another study by Yalçın (2006), students who had an experience of English study reported to use cognitive, compensation and affective strategies while less experienced learners tended to use memory, metacognitive and social strategies. Besides, he stated that previous English experience had an effect on strategy use of learners.

There are studies as well that showed a negative coorelation between strategy use and duration of language study. For instance, Rahimi, Riazi and Saif (2008) found out that the frequency of the use of language learning strategies showed an increase while the

number of months that students studied English increased. Their study concluded that the years of English study is a predictor of strategy use, but in a negative way.

In conclusion, language learning strategies, which are activities contributing to and facilitating the learning process, are inevitably affected by factors such as learning style, gender, personality, motivation, cultural background, life-experience, age, attitude, etc. For that reason, it is not unusual to say that all learners are unique and this requires them to gain strategies that suits their need best.

2.5. Reading Comprehension and Learning Strategies in Relation to Reading

2.5.1. Defining reading skill

There is a consensus among scholars such as Dublin (1982), Thiele and Herzic (1983) that prerequisite of language learning is reading skill before the productive skills writing or speaking (Grabe, 2002; Hussein, 2011). Besides, it is regarded as the easiest and fundamental way of being exposed to target language providing learners with the opportunity to develop their language proficiency, while it is seen as a laborious, demanding and anxiety-provoking task (Gorsuch and Taguchi, 2008; Grabe, 2002; Rajab et al., 2012). Because unlike the L1 reading, L2/ FL learners has to be familiar with spelling patterns, sentence structure, syntax, lexicons and other complex semantic relations of the language they have been learning as well as cultural background knowledge (Rajab et al., 2012:363), and they have an underdeveloped word recognition skills of target language. Moreover, it is difficult for learners to reach a high level of proficiency in reading (Grabe, 2002). It is for these reasons that researchers tend to draw a wide attention to the reading comprehension and that students should be aware of the reading as 'a process of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, and problem solving' (Hussein, 2011:237). Here, it would be salient to shed light on the reading concept.

Although there are many definitions of reading in the literature, researchers tend to define the term reading from two points of views (Hussein, 2011). The first one was dominant until the late 1970s and regards the reading as bottom-up process of mounting of the word and grasping the meaning from the text by decoding (Duncan, 1961). Subsequently, thanks to the studies in second language reading conducted from a

psycholinguistic perspective, this simple definition of reading began to be seen as incomplete, and the reading was redefined as 'the combination of simultaneous bottom-up and top-down processing' (McNeil, 2012:64). Put it differently, reading involves both attentional capacity such as identification of words and more demanding processes such as comprehension tasks. According to the later perspective, it is the ability to make connections between sentences, and inferences (Hussein, 2011). Similarly, Cates and Swaffar (1979) also confirm that reading is not only understanding words, phrases, and surface meaning of a text but also requires a series processes such as recognizing the syntactic relations in a sentence, relations between sentences and making interpretations and inferences by involving the background knowledge (Rajab et al., 2012).

According to the second view, reading involves a series of complex processes going on in the brain. Grabe (1999) and Kucer (2005) have demonstrated that reading is not a simple action of getting the meaning, rather it is a multifaceted skill as a purposeful process, a linguistic process, a complex and automatic process, a process of interaction of background knowledge and textual information, and a sociocultural and cognitive process. Firstly, the reading ability is regarded as a rapid and automatic process in the sense that the brain uses a mixture of textual information and the background knowledge simultaneously and automatically at any time to construct meaning. Besides, the information received in working memory should be active during the process (Grabe, 1999). Secondly, it is stated that reading is a purposeful process, for readers have certain goals in their readings of the texts, for instance, they may look for an answer of a question or find relevant information about a person etc. (Manoli and Papadopoulou, 2012). Thirdly, reading is a linguistic process that enables reader to comprehend the meaning in the text by means of linguistic processing. Furthermore, the strategic aspect of reading process is emphasized. The readers can realize the effective ways and techniques that enable them to achieve their goals in reading, after they make an evaluation and monitoring of their reading process. Lastly, Koda (2007) has pointed out cross linguistic aspect of L2 reading. According to Koda, in contrast to L1 reading, second language reading is the result of activating and involving two languages simultaneously. He states:

'The dual-language involvement implies continual interactions between the two languages as well as incessant adjustments in accommodating the disparate demands each language imposes. For this reason, L2 reading is cross linguistic and, thus, inherently more complex than L1 reading.' (1).

The ultimate goal of all reading is the comprehension of the written text, while in L2 and FL settings, the emphasis is on two main goals meant to be achieved: (a) to improve and enrich reading skill and (b) to stimulate language development via exposure to the written materials (Bruton and Marks, 2004).

2.5.2. Processes in Reading

To perform reading task fluently, there are required cognitive processing that our brain undertakes. There are basically two processing required for reading activity: higher level processing and lower level processing, both of which have different functions and of great importance (Grabe, 2002).

Lower level processing deals with activating the mechanism for reader to recognize word meanings rapidly and automatically for use of learners in working memory. It is here that reader automatically access lexical skill, basic structural information and syntactic information to create meaning at clause level. According to Samuels (2006) orthographical and phonological identification of words take place in this level with minimal attention; that is why, it is important to be automatized in lower level process (Gorsuch and Taguchi, 2008). In other words, readers do not stop on each word to think about their meanings, rather they access words and their meanings automatically and mostly rapidly. Moreover, the syntax and semantics of clauses in a text is a salient part of lower level processing. When the reader reads a clause, he automatically has the syntactic and semantic data such as information about word order and relations among phrases, and grasps the meaning via the combination of data about word meanings (Grabe, 2002).

Higher level processing is the place where readers make an interpretation of the text, grasp the main points, reach a point to be able to make inferences and have the awareness of their reading purpose through activating background schemas and using strategies. Within the higher level processing, a great deal of attentional resources is necessary, because, as Reynolds (2000) states, accessing past experiences schemata and controlling the ongoing comprehension require readers' effort to undertake the processing (Gorsuch

and Taguchi, 2008). Also, reader involves his attitude to the text, his views about the purposes of the writer, his past experiences with reading similar texts, his motivation, his evaluation of the text and his goals in reading the text during the process of reading (Grabe, 2002). That means that understanding texts requires an interaction between two levels of processing.

Both levels have irreplaceable roles in the complex task of reading. Every task at each level has to be fulfilled for the comprehension of texts. Otherwise, the task cannot be fulfilled. For instance, a young child at the beginning phase of reading may succeed in spelling the words and may recognize the words; however, he fails to understand the meaning at clause-level, if he only focuses on recognition of the words. This is due to the inability to make inferences and reasoning. Thus, a good reader is expected to undertake both levels interactively and automatically.

2.5.3. Influencial Factors on Development of SL/FL Reading

There are many factors that affect reading skills of language learners such as grammatical knowledge, depth of vocabulary, strategic knowledge, background knowledge, syntactic knowledge and metacognitive awareness. For that reason, attention should be paid to some issues in L2 reading.

2.5.3.1. Limited Knowledge of L2

Studies have shown that L2 readers face more difficulties when compared to L1 readers, for they lack the initial language base and naturally have little knowledge of spoken language, that is, knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structures and phonological patterns. In his study comparing the reading acquisition of Turkish students who learn German as a second language and German students who learn the language as their mother tongue in primary school, Verhoeven (1990) found out that Turkish students experience difficulties in various processes of reading. They were less successful then their Dutch peers in word recognition and reading comprehension tasks, both of which were shown to be results of the students' oral proficiency in their second language. Besides, the depth of vocabulary knowledge- the level of knowledge about a word- and the size of vocabulary

repertoire are found to be directly related to reading comprehension (Nergis, 2013; Grabe, 2002; Verhoeven, 1990; Koda, 2007).

2.5.3.2. Transfer of Skills

Transfer was traditionally defined by many scholars such as Krashen (1983), Gass and Selinker (1983) and Odlin (1989) as learner's use of their L1 linguistic knowledge to compensate for the deficiency in grasping the mechanism of L2 rules (Koda, 2007). It is clear from the definition that transfer was regarded as the result of insufficient acquisition of L2. However, there was no agreement on the definition of transfer.Researches (e.g. August and Shanahan, 2006; Riches and Genesee, 2006) conducted in order to shed light on the concept's unexplained sides provided a redefinition of the term as the ability to get new skills relying on their repertoire of knowledge, skills and abilities that they previously acquired (Koda, 2007). According to the latter view, L1 knowledge is regarded as the sources available for learners in order to make use of when they start to learn the target language, even when they are at higher level of proficiency. However, there are scholars such as Durgunoglu and Verhoeven (1998) proposing that transfer of L1 knowledge of various types to L2 learning can led to interferences at the same time it can be supportive for learners (Grabe, 2002).

2.5.3.3. Patterns of Text Organization

Familiarity with the surface structure of texts such as places of main topic, arguments and summarizing paragraphs within the texts in addition to other organizational characteristics of the text enable readers understand the texts more easily (Grabe, 2002; Koda, 2007). L2 readers may experience difficulty in understanding unfamiliar texts because of insufficient exposure to them. Training L2 reader about the organization of the information and structure in the text is proved to improve students' comprehension ability in studies carried out by scholars such as Baumann (1993) (Grabe, 2002; Koda, 2007).

2.5.3.4. Limited Exposure to L2 and L2 Reading Experience

L2 readers in general do not receive sufficient exposure to L2 text; however this is the most available way for them to develop their reading skill as it can be developed by rapid and automatic word recognition and by extensive exposure to texts. For that reason, it is important to be exposed to such texts and to do exercise for a fluent reading of L2. In instruction of reading, different and authentic materials are required for the purpose of exposing learners to L2.

2.5.3.5. The Role of Target Language

Attitude is well reported (Vann and Abraham, 1987; Horwitz, 1987; İnal et al.,) to influence learners' commitment to the language, satisfaction of L2 and their success in the target language (Griffiths, 2013). Vann and Abraham (1987) proved in their study that students' beliefs and attitude affected their success. The same result was observed in reading studies too, such as Williams (1981) and Connor (1983) that attitude second language learners develop towards SL has a strong influence over their achievement in reading (Verhoeven, 1990).

2.5.3.6. The Role of Stategy Use

L2 reading strategies are also shown to affect learners' reading development (Kucukoglu, 2013; Nergis, 2013; Phakiti, 2003; Akkaya, 2012; Manoli and Papadopoulou, 2012; Oxford, 1990; Zafarani and Kabgani, 2014). For example mental translation is unique to L2 readers and it has been said to be useful at early stages while dealing with difficult texts. Bilingual dictionaries, cognates and glosses are also making it easy for readers to comprehend the texts if they are used appropriately and effectively. The role of strategy use is presented below as the main argument of this study.

2.5.4. Studies on Language Strategies in Reading

Researches on the effects of strategy use in L2 reading began in the late 1970s by studies in psychology, which favoured the strategies regarding them as the techniques that a person puts into action to achieve what he wants (Ghavamnia et al., 2013; Manoli and Papadopoulou, 2012). With a shift from the traditional way of understanding texts that gave priority to the reading products such as vocabulary teaching and scores on reading to the process of reading itself, strategy use in reading for a better comprehension of the texts became a central issue among researchers (Ay, 2008; Ghavamnia et al., 2013). Hence, in the next two decades, many researches were conducted about reading strategies.

Reading strategies, as a part of learning strategies, have been recognized as a fundamental instrument for a better success of language learners in their reading comprehension performances (Chang, 2011; Cohen, 1998; Oxford, 1990; Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2001; Huang, Chern and Lin, 2009) and has great contribution to SL and FL reading (Phakiti, 2003, 2008, McNeil, 2012). Urlaub (2012:297) defines reading strategies as the 'procedures that readers consciously apply to texts in order to facilitate and monitor their comprehension as they attempt to read a text'. Similarly, Jime´nez et al. (1995) regards strategies as the consciously applied by the readers to comprehend the text they are dealing with (Urlaub, 2012).

Carrel (1985), Manoli and Papadopoulou (2012) and McNeil (2012) reported that reading strategies facilitate and monitor the comprehension of the texts. For that reason, many researches (Nergis, 2013; Phakiti, 2003; Akkaya, 2012; Lau and Chan, 2007; Aghaie and Zhang, 2012; Kucukoglu, 2013; Manoli and Papadopoulou, 2012; Zafarani and Kabgani 2014) have supported the teaching of strategies for the sake of students to help them understand the texts easily. One of the scholars that examined the importance of strategic knowledge is Phakiti (2003) who conducted an extensive study to investigate the relationship between the cognitive and metacognitive strategies and the reading skill of foreign language learners of English. He applied a strategy questionnaire to 384 EFL students and found out that both strategy groups contributed to the reading performance of the students up to 22%. However, he also pointed out that more successful students make use of their strategic knowledge more than less successful one. A similar study examining the effects of cognitive strategy instruction on Chinese reading comprehension among

Hong Kong low achieving students belongs to Lau and Chan (2007). They applied a cognitive strategy instruction program to the experimental group for six weeks. When the study's findings were reported, the program was found to have a positive effect on the learners in experimental group when compared to the control group who kept receiving traditional Chinese language instruction. Participants in the experimental group improved themselves in reading comprehension tasks and became aware of strategies; hence they began to use more strategies and developed a positive attitude towards reading instruction. Similarly, Aghaie and Zhang (2012) implemented a program on Iranian EFL students for four months to evaluate the effects of teaching cognitive and metacognitive strategies on reading comprehension of learners and strategy transfer. Their study concluded that strategy instruction increased the use of strategy among learners enabling them to be more successful in reading comprehension tasks as well as to have more autonomous reading behaviours.

There are studies that have been carried out in Turkey such as Nergis (2013), Akkaya (2012), Yıldırım and Akcaoglu (2012), Kucukoglu, (2013) and Ay (2008, 2009). In their studies, for instance, Yıldırım and Akcaoglu (2012) investigated the effect of strategy-based instruction on gifted students' language proficiency. A comparison of the control group and the experimental group showed that strategy-based instruction produced a positive correlation with gifted students' language proficiency level and contributed to FL learning process improving a positive attitude towards the target language. Another scholar that examined the importance of strategic knowledge is Nergis (2013) who has shown that advanced learners compensate for their weaknesses by the help of strategic knowledge. In other words, she argues that strategic knowledge plays an important role as sources of compensation in learner's reading performances. When the learner feels incomplete to comprehend the text, he applies the strategies to deal with the comprehension difficulties. Akkaya (2012) has also investigated the relationship between teacher candidates' critical thinking and the use of reading strategies. She put forwards that out of four skills, reading is the most effective one that contributes to the learners' conceptual knowledge and their higher order of thinking skills such as critical thinking. She argues that reading strategies are based on the principals of critical reading; thus, use of these strategies would contribute to students' critical thinking skill. The study in which she examined the relationship between teacher candidates' critical thinking skills and the use of reading strategies at

Dokuz Eylül University confirmed her argument, reporting a positive correlation teacher candidates' level of reading strategy use and their critical thinking disposition.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This thesis aims at exploring and investigating the relationship between language learning strategies students employ and their reading comprehension at Bingol University. Besides, the differences between the high and the low levels of performances by students are emphasized along with other variables, such as, age, gender, and years of English study. The research addresses the following questions:

(a) What language learning strategies do the students utilize most?

(b) What is the relationship between students' use of strategies and reading comprehension performances?

(c) What type of strategies do high-proficiency level students prefer to use?

(d) What type of strategies do low-proficiency level students prefer to use?

(e) Does the inventory of strategy use change with gender?

(f) Does the inventory of strategy use change within age groups?

(g) Does the inventory of strategy use change with the years of English study?

3.1 Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at the Department of English Language and Literature and Preparatory School at Bingöl University in Turkey. The department accepts students according to their score in YLSY-6 exam administered by OSYM. After their enrolment at the university, students take an English proficiency test which is applied for placement purpose. Students who score 70 and above on the test, are considered to be proficient, and begin their study at the Department of English Language and Literature without attending to English preparatory class. Students who fail in the test must start at preparatory school where they take courses in each of four skills reading, listening, speaking and writing.

Besides, they have to certify that they are competent enough to be transferred to the department by retaking the test.

The participants of this study consist of preparatory class students, freshmen, and sophomores at Department of English Language and Literature at Bingöl University. There were 140 participants in this study, whose age ranged between 19-31 years. In terms of gender, 94 of them are females while 46 of them are males. Students' aim in studying English language varies from one individual to another, as some wish to become English teachers, or have a career as an interpreter or translator in the future, while others simply interested in learning the English language and have a passion for English literature. Before they got enrolled, they had an experience of English language learning for about 9 years: the last two years of primary school, three years of junior school and four years high school. In the study, however, students were asked to write down how many years they took English courses (not less than four hours in a week). Though study of English has always been a hot topic among students as well as parents, attainment levels have never been satisfactory. Therefore, this partially explains the low scores of participants and their reason to choose and study at Bingol University.

The demographic information of participant students regarding their age, grade, proficiency level and gender is shown in tables below.

Table 3.1.1. Distribution of Participating Students According to Grade

Grade	Frequency	Percent
Preparatory	22	15,7
Freshman	57	40,7
Sophomore	61	43,6
Total	**140**	**100,0**

22 of the students participated in the study (15,7 %) were preparatory class students, 57 of them (40,7 %) were freshman, and 61 of them (43,6%) were sophomore.

The study used the Reading Comprehension Test to determine participants' proficiency level. According to the results of the test, the mean score of participants is 35.33, and students were divided into two groups: students with higher score of reading comprehension test than 35.33 were considered high-proficiency level learners, and those

whose scores of reading comprehension test were lower than 35.33 were determined as low-proficiency level learners.

Table 3.1.2. Distribution of Participating Students According to Proficiency Level

Proficiency	Frequency	Percent
High-level	76	54,3
Low-level	64	45,7
Total	**140**	**100,0**

It is illustrated in the table below that 54,3% students are at high proficiency level (n=76), while 45,7% are at low proficiency level (n=64).

As it is illustrated, there is a big gap between the numbers of age groups. While students aged between 19 and 25 constitute 88,6% (n=124) of all students, those whose ages range between 26 and 31 are only 11,4% (n=16). The age range is not typical of same departments across the universities that offer English Literature courses in Turkey. Within the 19-31 age range, some of the older participants are those that decided to change their careers, or improve their performances at their current jobs such tourism guide and so forth.

Table 3.1.3. Distribution of participating students according to age

Age	Frequency	Percent
19-25	124	88,6
26-31	16	11,4
Total	**140**	**100,0**

Among the participants, 32,9% students are males (n=46) whereas 67,1% constitute female students (n=94). This range is not surprising, as the number of females often outnumber males in language departments of all universities. The table illustrates the distribution of students by their gender below:

Table 3.1.4. Distribution of participating students according to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	46	32,9
Female	94	67,1
Total	**140**	**100,0**

Finally, participants' English background was investigated. They were asked to write down how many years they took English courses if they had. According to their answer, it was determined that the participants have an experience of English Language for about 5 years ranging from minimum 2 years to maximum 10 years. 59 of all participants (42,1%) are studying English between 2 and 5 years, and 81 of them (57,9%) are in the field between 6 and 10 years. The table shows the frequency and percentage of the results:

Table 3.1.5. Distribution of Participating Students According to Previous English Experience

Study-Year	Frequency	Percent
2-5 years	59	42,1
6-10 Years	81	57,9
Total	**140**	**100,0**

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

The instrument for data collection included two tests which were designed for broad coverage of representative members of students. The study attempts to answer which of strategies correlate with higher reading comprehension results in test. Hence, two different tests were needed; the first one is reading comprehension test to determine students' proficiency level while the other test used to specify the strategies learners use.

3.2.1. The Reading Comprehension Test

The Reading Comprehension Test was used and validated so that participants' reading comprehension scores could be used for further analyses. In other words, the study

used the test to assess participants' proficiency levels. The passages and questions in the test were extracted from Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL by Deborah Phillips (2007), as the TOEFL test, whose reliability and validity was proved and accepted worldwide, is considered to be a standardized test for ESL and EFL learners,. Reading Comprehension Test used in the study was also determined to have an alpha coefficient of 0.837.

The test consists of two passages and questions related to each of them. Each passage has 13 multiple-choice questions. The test was used to classify participants into two groups as high-proficiency level and low-proficiency level according to the results: students, who scored higher than 35.33 in the test, were grouped into high English proficiency. On the other hand, the students whose scores of reading comprehension test were lower than 35.33 were classified into the group of low English proficiency.

3.2.2. Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

In addition to measures that were used only for placement purposes, the main instrument in this study is the 50-item version of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) for EFL learners. The reason why SILL was used in this study is that it is probably the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies to date and the most widely used one (Ellis, 1994; Griffiths, 2003). It consists of questions covering the four main skills, reading, listening, writing and speaking. Furthermore, its reliability has been proven to be high across many cultures and its validity has been checked many times in multiple ways (Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995). Reliability (Cronbach Alpha for internal consistency) of various forms of the SILL ranges from .93 to .98, depending on whether participants take the inventory in L2/FL or in their mother tongue (Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995). In this study, the inventory was implemented in Turkish to prevent and minimize misunderstandings on the part of students. The total internal reliability of Turkish version of SILL was found out to be .92 reliability coefficients in the study by Cesur and Fer (2007) examining the validity and reliability of Turkish version of SILL. Their study proved that the Turkish version has the validity and reliability to be used in research studies.

SILL is a self-scoring, paper-and-pencil questionnaire which consists of a serious of statements such as 'I start conversation in English', to which students are asked to respond on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1(never/almost never) to 5 (always/almost always). There are six groups of strategies in 50-item version of SILL for EFL learners: (1) memory strategies such as reviewing and creating mental linkages; (2) cognitive strategies such as analysis and practice; (3) compensation strategies for using the language despite lack of knowledge; (4) metacognitive strategies such as planning and self-evaluating the learning; (5) affective strategies for dealing with emotions and attitudes; (6) social strategies such as asking questions and cooperating with peers or natives.

3.3. Data Collection Procedures

The test and the survey were implemented as a classroom activity during the class time, getting permission of instructors to ask their students whether to they wish to take part in the study. Students were assured that they fulfilled the task in order to contribute to the studies in the field of language learning strategies, and they took part in the study voluntarily. They were reminded that their performance in reading test would not influence their scores of any course. Moreover, they were informed about the purpose of the study, and felt secure that this study would serve their needs, as they would be given feedback and will receive help on their own strategy use. Besides, it was stated that new strategies would be suggested to the students to compensate for their weaknesses and to be more successful. For SILL, students were advised that there is no right or wrong answer in the inventory, therefore they were recommended to give their honest answers.

The study was designed to last an hour: 40 minutes for reading test, 10 minutes for SILL, and a ten-minute break between the two tests. Firstly, the participants took the reading test without getting any help such as using dictionaries, and completed it in the given time. After the break time, they were given the questionnaires to complete. The researcher was present in the class to answer any question from the participants. After they completed the tasks, the participants handed in the tests to the researcher. The data collecting process ended without any problem.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for Microsoft Windows 15.0 was used to evaluate and analyse the collected data. To determine which statistical analyses should be used to interpret and report the data gathered from reading test and questionnaire, Kolmogorov-Smirnov (test of normality) Test was implemented; and Levene Test was applied to investigate the homogeneity of the variance. As a result, the data was found out to be nonparametric. Therefore, Chi Square test was implemented to determine whether there is a significant difference between the groups in each category. Besides, means and standard deviations were provided for making comparisons. The data analysis was conducted in an order. First, mean and standard deviation of each strategy in the SILL was investigated in order to examine participants' preferred language learning strategies. In the second step, Chi Square test was employed to search for the relationship between the respondents' strategy use and their proficiency level as well gender, age and years of English study. The results were supplemented in tables.

The analysis of statistical data was done according to the six categories of SILL. The distribution of strategy items in SILL according to these six groups is presented in the table below:

Table 3.4.1. The Distribution of Strategy Items According to Six Strategy Groups

Strategy Type	Items	Total
Memory strategies	1-9	9
Cognitive strategies	10-23	14
Compensation strategies	24-29	6
Metacognitive stratgeies	30-38	9
Affective strtageies	39-44	6
Social strtagiies	45-50	6
		50

The significance level for all tests was determined as p = .05 throughout the study to interpret the result. Values lower than 0.05 would be considered significant.

According to Oxford's (1990) 5-Likert scale, strategy users are divided into three groups based on mean score on the strategy questionnaire. Participants with the mean score

2.4 or below are low strategy users. Learners who get the mean score between 2.5 and 3.4 are considered as medium strategy users. Concurrently, the participants with the mean score 3.5 or above belong to the high strategy users group. Oxford's grouping criteria were adopted in this study to interpret the findings.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the quantitative analyses of findings and results illustrated by tables within the framework of research questions. First, mean and the percentage of overall strategy use of participants were examined and illustrated in a table in detail. Then, high and low students preferred strategies in relation to their achievement were investigated through Chi Square test and the results were provided in tables for clarification. And lastly, Chi Square test was conducted to find out the relationship between strategy use and the other variables gender, age and previous English experience. The data were interpreted respectively to find answers to the each research question.

4.1. Results of the SILL

The results are presented with regards to the seven questions respectively:

4.1.1. What Language Learning Strategies Do the Students Utilize Most?

The quantitative results of strategy use by all participants were analysed in three sections. In the first step, participants' overall strategy use was explored. Secondly, participants' subcategory preferences were investigated. In the last step, use of each strategy under each subcategory was uncovered.

Firstly, all participants' strategy use mean with percentage of low, medium and high strategy user groups were calculated to explore the participants' strategy use levels. The table below shows mean and standard deviation of strategy users:

Table 4.1.1.1. Average Reported Language Learning Strategy Use Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) with Frequency (N) and Percentage of Participants

Strategy Use	N	%	S.D.	Mean
Low strategy users	12	8,6		
Medium strategy users	87	62,1	0,58	3,19
High strategy users	41	29,3		
Total	**140**	**100,0**		

The table shows that the participants belonged to medium strategy user group. Only 12 of (8,6 %) of participants were labelled as low strategy users, 87 of them were medium (62,1%), and 41 of them were described as high strategy users (29,3%).

Then, participants' subgroup strategy use means were examined to find out which group of strategies was used mostly by learners. The findings are presented below in the table:

Table 4.1.1.2. Distribution of Participant' Responses for Six Group of Strategies

Group of strategies	Mean	S.D.
Memory Strategies	2,86	0,64
Cognitive Strategies	3,23	0,65
Compensation Strategies	3,67	0,72
Metacognitive Strategies	3,35	0,76
Affective Strategies	2,77	0,68
Social Strategies	3,27	0,83

It is clear from the table that the most used strategies were compensation group with the highest mean value 3,67. Then, it is followed respectively by metacognitive strategies (3,35), social strategies (3,27), cognitive strategies (3,23), memory strategies (2,86), and the least used group affective strategies (2,77).

Finally, according to participants' responses to 50 items in the inventory, frequency test was run to examine how often each strategy under each subcategory was used, and mean value of each strategy was found out. Besides, frequency and percentage of all options were supplied below.

Tablo 4.1.1.3. Distribution of Participants' responses to 50 items in SILL

	Strategies	Mean	SD	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always	
				N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I think of relationship between what l already know and new things l learn in English.	**3,91**	0,86	2	1,4	7	5,0	31	22,1	64	45,7	36	25,7
2	I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.	2,79	1,16	21	15,0	36	25,7	46	32,9	25	17,9	12	8,6
3	I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word.	3,16	1,19	13	9,3	28	20,0	44	31,4	33	23,6	22	15,7
4	I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.	3,10	1,14	12	8,5	33	23,6	48	34,3	27	19,3	20	14,3
5	I use rhymes to remember new English words.	2,11	1,20	60	42,9	30	21,4	31	22,1	12	8,6	7	5,0
6	I use flashcards to remember new English words.	2,06	1,26	65	46,4	31	22,1	25	17,9	8	5,7	11	7,9
7	I physically act out new English words.	2,42	1,16	36	25,7	43	30,7	38	27,1	14	10,0	9	6,4
8	I review English lessons often.	2,95	1,01	10	7,1	32	22,9	65	46,4	21	15,0	12	8,6
9	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.	3,20	1,30	18	12,9	25	17,9	35	25,0	35	25,0	27	19,3
10	I say or write new English words several times.	3,61	1,14	3	2,1	23	16,4	42	30,0	30	21,4	42	30,0
11	I try to talk like native English speakers.	3,55	1,20	8	5,7	21	15,0	34	24,3	40	28,6	37	26,4
12	I practice the sounds of English.	3,25	1,20	12	8,6	28	20,0	41	29,3	33	23,6	26	18,6
13	I use the English words I know in different ways.	2,65	1,00	17	12,1	45	32,1	53	37,9	18	12,9	7	5,0
14	I start conversations in English.	2,99	1,30	22	15,7	29	20,7	37	26,4	29	20,7	23	16,4
15	I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.	3,38	1,25	12	8,6	24	17,1	35	25,0	37	26,4	32	22,9
16	I read for pleasure in English.	2,67	1,26	31	22,1	33	23,5	42	30,0	20	14,3	14	10,0
17	I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.	3,16	1,11	9	6,4	31	22,1	46	32,9	36	25,7	18	12,9
18	I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.	3,68	1,11	8	5,7	10	7,1	42	30,0	41	29,3	39	27,9
19	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.	2,98	1,31	25	17,9	22	15,7	47	33,6	23	16,4	23	16,4
20	I try to find patterns in English.	3,60	1,08	6	4,3	22	15,7	29	20,7	53	37,9	30	21,4
21	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.	3,16	1,22	14	10	33	23,6	34	24,3	37	26,4	22	15,7
22	I try not to translate word-for-word.	3,41	1,16	12	9,5	17	12,1	47	33,6	35	25,0	29	20,7
23	I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.	3,14	1,05	7	5,0	34	24,3	48	34,3	36	25,7	15	10,7
24	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.	3,60	1,16	7	5,0	18	12,9	37	26,4	40	28,6	40	27,1
25	When I cannot think of a word	3,65	1,26	12	8,6	15	10,7	26	18,6	44	31,4	43	30,7

	during a conversation in English, I use gestures.											
26	I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.	4,09	0,96	4	2,9	3	2,1	26	18,6	51	36,4	56	40,0
27	I read English without looking up every new word.	3,16	1,37	23	16,4	21	15,0	38	27,1	27	19,3	31	22,1
28	I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.	3,51	1,19	12	8,6	16	11,4	35	25,0	45	32,1	32	22,9
29	If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.	4,03	1,00	2	1,4	8	5,7	32	22,9	40	28,6	58	41,4
30	I try to find as many ways as I can use my English.	3,39	1,06	5	3,6	22	15,7	51	36,4	37	26,4	25	17,9
31	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better	3,69	1,03	4	2,9	13	9,3	39	27,9	51	36,4	33	23,6
32	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	4,24	0,89	1	0,7	2	1,4	30	21,4	36	25,7	71	50,7
33	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	4,04	1,04	2	1,4	11	7,9	27	19,3	39	27,9	61	27,9
34	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	2,52	1,14	32	22,9	37	26,4	44	31,4	20	14,3	7	5,0
35	I look for people I can talk to in English.	3,14	1,40	24	17,1	25	17,9	32	22,9	27	19,3	32	22,9
36	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	2,61	1,18	28	20,0	39	27,9	43	30,7	19	13,6	11	7,9
37	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	3,17	1,18	9	6,4	36	25,7	41	29,3	30	21,4	24	17,1
38	I think about my progress in learning English.	3,34	1,20	11	7,9	20	14,3	51	36,4	27	19,3	31	22,1
39	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.	3,40	1,23	13	9,3	18	12,9	45	32,1	30	21,4	34	24,3
40	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.	3,21	1,32	16	11,4	30	21,4	34	24,3	28	20,0	32	22,9
41	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.	2,94	1,45	36	25,7	17	12,1	32	22,9	29	20,7	26	18,6
42	I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.	3,02	1,51	33	23,6	22	15,7	31	22,1	17	12,1	37	26,4
43	I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.	1,43	0,95	108	77,1	17	12,1	6	4,3	5	3,6	4	2,9
44	I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.	2,63	1,36	40	28,6	30	21,4	30	21,4	24	17,1	16	11,4
45	If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.	4,17	1,02	4	2,9	7	5,0	18	12,9	43	30,7	68	48,6
46	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.	3,44	1,57	29	20,7	15	10,7	14	10,0	30	21,4	52	37,1
47	I practice English with other students.	3,16	1,34	21	15,0	23	16,4	42	30,0	23	16,4	31	22,1
48	I ask for help from English speakers.	2,89	1,50	42	30,0	13	9,3	31	22,1	27	19,3	27	19,3
49	I ask questions in English.	2,51	1,08	29	20,7	37	26,4	55	39,3	11	7,9	8	5,7
50	I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.	3,44	1,29	16	11,4	15	10,7	37	26,4	36	25,7	36	25,7

A detailed examination of sub-categories was presented below:

Memory strategies

Memory strategies involve items 1 to 9. Among the memory group, item 1 (I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.) was the most used strategy by the learners with the mean score 3.91. Furthermore, not surprisingly, item 5 (I use rhymes to remember new English words.) was the least used strategy among learners with the mean score 2.11.

Cognitive strategies

These strategies include items between 10 and 24. The cognitive strategies were used at medium and high levels. Items 10 (I say or write new English words several times), 11 (I try to talk like native English speakers.), and 20 (I try to find patterns in English.) were the most highly used strategies of cognitive group with mean scores 3.61, 3.55, and 3.60 respectively. On the other hand, item 13 (I use the English words I know in different ways.) was found to be the least used strategy.

Compensation strategies

As aforementioned, the participants were reported to use compensation strategies covering items from 24 to 29, more often than the other subgroups. According to participants' responses, items 26 (I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.) and 29 (If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.) were considered as the most used strategies among learners with mean scores 4.09 and 4.03 respectively. However, item 27 (I read English without looking up every new word.) was found to be least used strategy among this group of strategy.

Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies involve items between 30 and 38. According to the findings, the students mostly used item 32 (I pay attention when someone is speaking English.) with

a mean score 4,24. On the other hand, item 34 (I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.) was reported to be the least used one.

Affective strategies

Affective strategies covering items between 39 and 44 were stated above to receive the least mean score compared to other groups. Affective strategies were examined and it was found out that item 39 (I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.) was the most highly used strategy. And item 43 (I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.) was the least used strategy not only among affective strategies, but among 50 strategies with a mean score 1,43. 108 of the participants marked the option 'never' for this item. On the other hand, only 4 students marked 'Always'.

Social Strategies

Social strategies include the last six items of strategies 45-50, and these items show learners' ability to interact with people. Item 45 (If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.) was found to have the highest mean score (4,14) among this group. On the contrary, item 49 (I ask questions in English.) was shown to be used the least by learners.

Additionally, it was observed that item 32 (I pay attention when someone is speaking English.) was used at the highest level (mean. 4,24) of all 50 strategy item. On the other hand, item 43 (I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.) had the lowest frequency level with a mean score 1,43 among all items.

4.1.2. What Is the Relationship between Students Use of Strategies and Their Proficiency Level?

Students were classified as high proficiency level and low proficiency level students according to their success on Reading Test. To find out whether the use of strategies has an effect on students' proficiency level or not, the Chi Square test was applied, and the results were presented in two ways through two separate tables below. The first table shows mean,

and standard deviation values as well as frequencies of each group's strategy use. The relationship between the two variables was investigated in three steps. First, the relationship between overall strategy use and proficiency level was explored. Then, the effect of each single strategy on proficiency of students was calculated. Thirdly, whether subgroup strategies were influential or not was examined.

First of all, the effect of overall strategy use on proficiency of students was examined via the Chi Square test. Mean and standard deviation with a significance level were shown in the table below:

Table 4.1.2.1. Average reported mean and frequency (N) of strategy use, according to proficiency level

Proficiency Level	Low strategy users	Medium strategy users	High strategy users	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
High level	6	44	26	76	3,43	0,60	
Low level	6	43	15	64	2,91	0,56	**0,214**
Total	**12**	**87**	**41**	**140**	**3,19**	**0,58**	

According to the results of the Chi Square test to examine the difference between participants' proficiency levels in using strategy, it was reported that there was not a statistically significant relationship between the two variables as the significance level p=0,214 indicated. The table, also, shows that high proficiency level students (n=76) used strategies with a mean score 3,43. 26 of them were high strategy users, 44 of them were medium, and 6 of them were low strategy users. On the other hand, low proficiency level students (n=64) were labelled as medium strategy users with the mean score 2, 91. 15 of them were high strategy users, 43 of them belong to medium strategy user group, and 6 of them were considered as low strategy users.

Which strategy is used most by each group was also examined by applying the Chi Square test. Significance values were presented to uncover their effect on the proficiency level of students. Mean and standard deviation with a significance level of each item are offered below in the table:

Table 4.1.2.2. Average Reported Frequency of Language Learning Strategy Use for High and Low Proficiency Level Participants (Highly frequent items are presented in bold for emphasis)

	Strategies	High Level		Low Level		Sig
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.	3,82	0,93	4,03	0,76	0,142
2	I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.	2,93	1,19	2,63	1,11	0,116
3	I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word.	3,18	1,23	3,14	1,15	0,829
4	I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.	3,30	1,18	2,88	1,06	**0,030**
5	I use rhymes to remember new English words.	2,24	1,31	1,97	1,05	0,188
6	I use flashcards to remember new English words.	1,96	1,15	2,19	1,38	0,288
7	I physically act out new English words.	2,48	1,21	2,34	1,10	0,490
8	I review English lessons often.	3,08	1,12	2,80	0,84	0,098
9	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.	3,30	1,33	3,08	1,26	0,308
10	I say or write new English words several times.	3,78	1,15	3,41	1,11	0,056
11	I try to talk like native English speakers.	3,66	1,25	3,42	1,12	0,245
12	I practice the sounds of English.	3,43	1,18	3,05	1,21	0,064
13	I use the English words I know in different ways.	2,82	1,05	2,44	0,89	**0,029**
14	I start conversations in English.	3,07	1,30	2,89	1,30	0,424
15	I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.	3,47	1,37	3,27	1,09	0,326
16	I read for pleasure in English.	2,75	1,27	2,59	1,24	0,458
17	I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.	3,24	1,12	3,08	1,10	0,399
18	I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.	3,87	1,17	3,47	1,01	**0,035**
19	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.	3,09	1,33	2,84	1,29	0,263
20	I try to find patterns in English.	3,75	1,02	3,42	1,14	0,075
21	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.	3,13	1,24	3,19	1,22	0,778
22	I try not to translate word-for-word.	3,68	1,20	3,08	1,04	**0,003**
23	I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.	3,17	1,08	3,11	1,02	0,737
24	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.	3,84	1,07	3,31	1,21	**0,007**
25	When I can' t think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.	3,64	1,34	3,66	1,16	0,957
26	I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.	4,18	0,96	3,97	0,96	0,187
27	I read English without looking up every new word.	3,50	1,36	2,75	1,27	**0,001**
28	I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.	3,45	1,27	3,58	1,11	0,539
29	If I can' t think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.	4,21	1,00	3,81	0,97	**0,019**
30	I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	3,50	1,15	3,27	0,95	0,194
31	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better	3,78	1,14	3,58	0,87	0,255
32	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	4,28	0,95	4,20	0,82	0,627
33	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	4,12	1,13	3,95	0,92	0,348
34	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	2,49	1,16	2,56	1,13	0,696
35	I look for people I can talk to in English.	3,25	1,39	3,02	1,41	0,325
36	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	2,71	1,29	2,50	1,02	0,293

37	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	3,22	1,29	3,11	1,04	0,568
38	I think about my progress in learning English.	3,39	1,27	3,27	1,12	0,525
39	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.	3,28	1,21	3,55	1,25	0,203
40	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.	3,37	1,35	3,03	1,28	0,133
41	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.	2,96	1,51	2,92	1,40	0,875
42	I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.	2,99	1,58	3,06	1,45	0,768
43	I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.	1,46	1,08	1,39	0,77	0,663
44	I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.	2,64	1,53	2,61	1,14	0,895
45	If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.	4,14	1,19	4,20	0,80	0,737
46	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.	3,39	1,58	3,48	1,57	0,736
47	I practice English with other students.	3,30	1,38	2,98	1,28	0,162
48	I ask for help from English speakers.	2,86	1,53	2,92	1,48	0,794
49	I ask questions in English.	2,53	1,17	2,50	0,98	0,886
50	I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.	3,42	1,34	3,45	1,25	0,884

It is clear from the table that *item 4* (I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.) was preferred by high-proficiency level participants with mean score 3,30 more often than by low proficiency level participants whose mean score was determined as 2,88. The results of the Chi Square test demonstrated that with p=0,030, a statistically significant difference was found between two groups. Therefore, item 4 can be stated to have an effect on students' proficiency level.

Another significant level (p=0,029) appeared between two groups in using the *item 13* (I use the English words I know in different ways.) according to the results of the Chi Square test, and was stated that the item was used more frequently by high-proficiency level participants than low-proficiency level ones. High-proficiency level learners had 2,82 mean score, whereas mean score of low-proficiency level students was determined as 2,44.

It is also observed that groups show differences in using *item 18* (I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.). When the results are examined in the table, it is clear that high-proficiency level participants (mean. 3,87) used the strategy more frequently than low-proficiency level ones (mean. 3,47). Chi Square test resulted in a statistically significant value p=0,035 which indicated that there was a relationship between students' proficiency and strategy use.

In this analysis, *item 22* (I try not to translate word-for-word) was found to be a strong predictor of being proficient in reading comprehension with the significant value

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0,003. According to the participants' responses to the item, high-proficiency level participants had a higher mean score (3,68) than low-proficiency level ones did (3,08).

Results of Chi Square test indicates that *item 24* (To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.) was a strong predictor of the participants' reading comprehension success, as there occurred statistically significant value p=0,007. The groups showed a considerable difference in using the strategy: high-proficiency level participants had a mean score 3,84 while low-proficiency level ones had 3,31.

Another key observation according to the results of Chi square test was that p=0,001 indicated a statistically significant value for *item 27* (I read English without looking up every new word.). It was observed to become influential on determining participants' proficiency level. The mean scores shows that high-proficiency level participants had a mean score 3,50 while low-proficiency level ones had 2,75.

According to the responses to the item 29 (If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.), high-proficiency level participants were determined to have a mean score 4,21. On the other hand, low-proficiency level learners had 3,81. With the Chi Square test, p=0,019 was found to be significant, it was stated that the item had higher frequency among high-proficiency level participants than it had among low-proficiency level learners.

4.1.3. What Type of Strategies Do High Proficiency Level Students Prefer to Use?

Mean and standard deviation of each item were examined to explore high-proficiency level students' preferred strategies. Besides, Chi Square test was conducted to investigate whether there is a relationship between their preferences and proficiency. The mean values of each strategy as well as each strategy group with standard deviation are presented below in the table:

Table 4.1.3.1. Mean Of Each Strategy Use with Standard Deviation of High-Proficiency Level Participants, Mean of Six Strategy Groups' Use, and Significance Level (The most highly used strategies were written in bold for emphasis.)

Strategy Group		Strategies	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Sig
Memory	1	I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.	**3,82**	0,93	2,92	0,57	0,004
	2	I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.	2,93	1,19			
	3	I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word.	3,18	1,23			
	4	I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.	3,30	1,18			
	5	I use rhymes to remember new English words.	2,24	1,31			
	6	I use flashcards to remember new English words.	1,96	1,15			
	7	I physically act out new English words.	2,48	1,21			
	8	I review English lessons often.	3,08	1,12			
	9	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.	3,30	1,33			
Cognitive	10	I say or write new English words several times.	**3,78**	1,15	3,35	0,65	
	11	I try to talk like native English speakers.	**3,66**	1,25			
	12	I practice the sounds of English.	3,43	1,18			
	13	I use the English words I know in different ways.	2,82	1,05			
	14	I start conversations in English.	3,07	1,30			
	15	I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.	3,47	1,37			
	16	I read for pleasure in English.	2,75	1,27			
	17	I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.	3,24	1,12			
	18	I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.	**3,87**	1,17			
	19	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.	3,09	1,33			
	20	I try to find patterns in English.	**3,75**	1,02			
	21	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.	3,13	1,24			
	22	I try not to translate word-for-word.	**3,68**	1,20			
	23	I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.	3,17	1,08			
Compensation	24	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.	**3,84**	1,07	3,80	0,71	
	25	When I cannot think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.	**3,64**	1,34			
	26	I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.	**4,18**	0,96			
	27	I read English without looking up every new word.	**3,50**	1,36			
	28	I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.	3,45	1,27			
	29	If I cannot think of an English word, I use a	4,21	1,00			

		word or phrase that means the same thing.						
Metacogni tive	30	I try to find as many ways as I can use my English.	**3,50**	1,15	3,42	0,86		
	31	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better	**3,78**	1,14				
	32	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	**4,28**	0,95				
	33	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	**4,12**	1,13				
	34	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	2,49	1,16				
	35	I look for people I can talk to in English.	3,25	1,39				
	36	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	2,71	1,29				
	37	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	3,22	1,29				
	38	I think about my progress in learning English.	3,39	1,27				
Affective	39	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.	3,28	1,21	2,78	0,76		
	40	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.	3,37	1,35				
	41	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.	2,96	1,51				
	42	I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.	2,99	1,58				
	43	I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.	1,46	1,08				
	44	I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.	2,64	1,53				
Social	45	If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.	**4,14**	1,19	3,27	0,88		
	46	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.	3,39	1,58				
	47	I practice English with other students.	3,30	1,38				
	48	I ask for help from English speakers.	2,86	1,53				
	49	I ask questions in English.	2,53	1,17				
	50	I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.	3,42	1,34				

The results give a clear picture of high-proficiency level students' preferred strategy groups in an order. According to the table, the order from the most used strategy group to the least is as follows:

1. Compensation Strategies (3,80)
2. Metacognitive Strategies (3,42)
3. Cognitive Strategies (3,35)
4. Social Strategies (3,27)
5. Memory Strategies (2,92)
6. Affective Strategies (2,78)

This order was found to be a strong predictor of students' proficiency level and, hence, their success as the significance level 0,004 indicated a statistically significant relationship between the variables. .

Items 1, 10, 11, 18, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33 and 45 were used by the group at a high level according to Oxford's classification (3.5 and above considered highly used group). On the other hand, items 6 and 43 were used at the lowest level.

4.1.4. What Type of Strategies Do Low Proficiency Level Students Prefer to Use?

Mean and standard deviation of each item was examined to explore low-proficiency level students' preferred strategies. Besides, Chi Square test was conducted to investigate whether there is a relationship between their preferences and proficiency. The mean values of each strategy as well as each strategy group with standard deviation are presented below in table:

Tablo 4.1.4.1. Mean of Each Strategy Use with Standard Deviation of Low-proficiency Level Participants, Mean of Six Strategy Groups' Use, and Significance Level (The most highly used strategies were written in bold for emphasis)

Strategy Group		Strategies	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Sig
Memory	1	I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.	**4,03**	0,76	2,78	0,60	0,001
	2	I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.	2,63	1,11			
	3	I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word.	3,14	1,15			
	4	I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.	2,88	1,06			
	5	I use rhymes to remember new English words.	1,97	1,05			
	6	I use flashcards to remember new English words.	2,19	1,38			
	7	I physically act out new English words.	2,34	1,10			
	8	I review English lessons often.	2,80	0,84			
	9	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.	3,08	1,26			
Cognitive	10	I say or write new English words several times.	3,41	1,11	3,09	0,62	
	11	I try to talk like native English speakers.	3,42	1,12			
	12	I practice the sounds of English.	3,05	1,21			
	13	I use the English words I know in different ways.	2,44	0,89			

	14	I start conversations in English.	2,89	1,30			
	15	I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.	3,27	1,09			
	16	I read for pleasure in English.	2,59	1,24			
	17	I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.	3,08	1,10			
	18	I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.	3,47	1,01			
	19	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.	2,84	1,29			
	20	I try to find patterns in English.	3,42	1,14			
	21	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.	3,19	1,22			
	22	I try not to translate word-for-word.	3,08	1,04			
	23	I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.	3,11	1,02			
Compensation	24	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.	3,31	1,21	3,51	0,71	
	25	When I can' t think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.	**3,66**	1,16			
	26	I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.	3,97	0,96			
	27	I read English without looking up every new word.	2,75	1,27			
	28	I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.	**3,58**	1,11			
	29	If I can' t think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.	**3,81**	0,97			
Metacognitive	30	I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	3,25	0,97	3,27	0,63	
	31	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better	**3,61**	0,92			
	32	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	**4,22**	0,83			
	33	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	**3,99**	0,99			
	34	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	2,63	1,16			
	35	I look for people I can talk to in English.	3,07	1,44			
	36	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	2,54	1,10			
	37	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	3,14	1,05			
	38	I think about my progress in learning English.	3,28	1,11			
Affective	39	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.	**3,50**	1,24	2,76	0,60	
	40	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.	3,07	1,32			
	41	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.	3,00	1,41			
	42	I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.	3,12	1,44			
	43	I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.	1,37	0,78			
	44	I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.	2,67	1,19			
Social	45	If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.	**4,09**	0,94	3,26	0,77	
	46	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.	**3,54**	1,54			
	47	I practice English with other students.	3,07	1,29			
	48	I ask for help from English speakers.	2,96	1,49			
	49	I ask questions in English.	2,59	1,06			
	50	I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.	3,43	1,23			

The results give a clear picture of low-proficiency level students' preferred strategy groups in an order. According to the table, the order from the most used strategy group to the least is as follows:

1. Compensation Strategies (3,51)
2. Metacognitive Strategies (3,27)
3. Social Strategies (3,26)
4. Cognitive Strategies (3,09)
5. Memory Strategies (2,78)
6. Affective Strategies (2,76)

This order was found to be a strong predictor of students' proficiency level and, hence, their success with significance level 0,001 that is considered statistically significant.

Items 1, 25, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 39 45 and 46 were used by the group at high level according to Oxford's classification (3.5 and above considered highly used group). On the other hand, items 5, 6, 7 and 43 were used at the lowest level.

4.1.5. Does the Inventory of Strategy Use Change with Gender?

The participants were grouped according to their gender, and males constitute 32,9 percent of all participants (n=46), while females' ratio is 67,1 (n=94). Chi Square test was applied to examine whether there is a correlation between gender and strategy use. However, it was found out that gender was not correlated to strategy use as the table indicate:

Table 4.1.5.1. Overall Strategy Use Mean with Standard Deviation According to Gender

	Low strategy users	Medium strategy users	High strategy users	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
Male	4	28	14	46	3,19	0,59	
Female	8	59	27	94	3,18	0,58	**0,884**
Total	**12**	**87**	**41**	**140**	**3,19**	**0,58**	

As the table shows, males and females used strategies almost equally. Males had a mean score of 0,59. Similarly, the mean value of females' strategy use was 0,58. According to

the result obtained from Chi Square test, the significance level was found 0,884 indicating that there was not a statistically significant relation between gender and strategy use.

To find out which subgroups strategy males use mostly, mean and standard deviation of each subgroup was explored, and then a Chi Square test was applied to investigate whether there is a significant relationship between their preferences and their sex. Males' use of each strategy group mean with standard deviation were presented in the table:

Table 4.1.5.2. Average Reported Mean of Males' Strategy Use According to the Strategy Groups with Standard Deviation and Significance Level of Males Strategy Use According to the Groups

Strategy Group	Mean	SD	Sig.
Memory	2,76	0,61	
Cognitive	3,39	0,64	
Compensation	3,72	0,71	
Metacognitive	3,37	0,73	**0,054**
Affective	2,70	0,64	
Social	3,38	0,79	

Results make it clear that there was not a statistically significant difference among strategy groups according to the males' prefrence of groups, as the significance level (p=0,054) indicates. The most preferred strategy group seemed to be compensating strategies whereas the least used one was affective strategies. Males tended to use strategies in an order from the top to the bottom as follows:

1. Compensation Strategies
2. Cognitive Strategies
3. Social Strategies
4. Metacognitive Strategies
5. Memory Strategies
6. Affective Strategies

Mean and standard deviation of each subgroup were explored to find out which strategy groups females tend to use mostly. Besides, a Chi Square test was applied to

investigate whether there is a significant relationship between their preferences and their sex. Females' use of each strategy group mean with standard deviation was presented below in the table:

Table 4.1.5.3. Average Reported Mean of Females' Strategy Use According to the Strategy Groups with Standard Deviation and Significance Level of Females Strategy Use According to the Groups

Strategy group	Mean	SD	Sig.
Memory	2,91	0,66	
Cognitive	3,16	0,64	
Compensation	3,65	0,73	**0,084**
Metacognitive	3,34	0,78	
Affective	2,81	0,70	
Social	3,21	0,84	

According to the results, there was not a statistically significant difference in females' preferences of subgroup strategies, as significance level (p=0,084) indicated. Similar to males, females also tended to prefer compensation strategies mostly whereas the least used one was affective strategies. Females' strategy use order from the top to the bottom is offered below:

1. Compensation Strategies
2. Metacognitive Strategies
3. Social Strategies
4. Cognitive Strategies
5. Memory Strategies
6. Affective Strategies

When the males and females groups are compared, it can be seen that both groups had almost equal order of strategy use. There was only a shift: males used cognitive strategies more often than females, while females used metacognitive group more than males.

4.1.6. Does the Inventory of Strategy Use Change with Age Groups?

Participants were divided into two groups: 124 of them were aged between 19 and 25, and 16 of them were between 26 and 31. To uncover whether the age factor is a strong determinant of strategy use, a Chi Square test was applied to examine the relationship between age and strategy use. Mean and standard deviation of age groups were also investigated to find any difference in strategy use between two age groups. The table demonstrates mean scores of each group with standard deviation, and significance level of strategy use and age:

Table 4.1.6.1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Participants' Overall Strategy Use According to Age Groups

Age	Low strategy users	Medium strategy users	High strategy users	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
19-25 Age	11	78	35	124	3,16	0,58	
26-31 Age	1	9	6	16	3,42	0,60	**0,441**
Total	12	87	41	140	3,19	0,58	

The table shows that older group and younger group belonged to the medium strategy users group with mean scores 3,42 and 3,16 respectively. According to the result obtained from Chi Square test, the significance level was found 0,441 indicating that there was not a statistically significant difference between age groups in strategy use.

To explore which subgroups strategy is used mostly by each age group, mean and standard deviation of each subgroup strategy was presented. Besides, a Chi Square test was applied to uncover if there is statistically significant relationship between their preferences and age. Use of each strategy group mean with standard deviation was presented below in the table below:

Table 4.1.6.2. Average Reported Mean and Standard Deviation of Six Groups of Strategy According to Age Groups

Age		Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Affective	Social
19-25 age	**Mean**	2,86	3,22	3,65	3,31	2,77	3,28
	SD	0,65	0,64	0,73	0,76	0,67	0,81
26-31 age	**Mean**	2,85	3,37	3,82	3,68	2,75	3,20
	SD	0,63	0,72	0,63	0,75	0,81	0,97
Total	**Mean**	**2,86**	**3,23**	**3,67**	**3,35**	**2,77**	**3,27**
	SD	**0,64**	**0,65**	**0,72**	**0,76**	**0,68**	**0,83**

According the results in the table, all participants in both groups depended on compensation strategies more than other strategies. On the other hand, they tend to use affective strategies least. Another important point in the table that older group has a higher mean score than younger group in using metacognitive strategies. There was not a significant difference in other strategies between two age groups.

4.1.7. Does the Inventory of Strategy Use Change with the Years of English Study?

The participants were distributed in two groups: those who have experience in English between 2-5 years and those who have experience in English between 6-10 years. To examine whether there is a relationship between students' use of language learning strategies and their previous English learning experience (only intensive courses), a Chi Square test was used. Moreover, mean and standard deviation of each group was offered. The table presents mean scores of each group with standard deviation, and significance level of strategy use and previous English learning experience:

Table 4.1.7.1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Participants' Overall Strategy Use According to Previous English Experience

Study Year	Low strategy users	Medium strategy users	High strategy users	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
2-5 years	2	34	23	59	3,33	0,55	
6-10 years	10	53	18	81	3,09	0,58	**0,01**
Total	**12**	**87**	**41**	**140**	**3,19**	**0,58**	

It is found that previous English experience was a strong predictor of strategy use, as significance level is determined as 0,01 indicating a statistically significant difference between more experienced group and less experienced one in strategy use. In contrast to expectations, less experienced group tend to use strategies more than more experienced ones.

To find out which subgroups strategy is used mostly by each group, mean values with standard deviation were found. Moreover, the Chi Square test was applied to uncover if there is statistically significant relationship between their preferences of subgroup strategies and years of English study. The table presents the values below:

Table 4.1.7.2. Average Reported Mean and Standard Deviation of Six Groups of Strategy According to Previous English Experience

Study-Year		Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Affective	Social
2-5 years	Mean	3,02	3,42	3,78	3,49	2,79	3,38
	SD	0,65	0,58	0,68	0,71	0,72	0,74
6-10 years	Mean	2,74	3,10	3,59	3,25	2,76	3,19
	SD	0,61	0,66	0,74	0,79	0,66	0,88
Total	Mean	2,86	3,23	3,67	3,35	2,77	3,27
	SD	0,64	0,65	0,72	0,76	0,68	0,83

The table demonstrates that both groups mostly used compensation strategies. Besides, those who have experience between 2-5 years had the lowest mean score (2,79) in affective strategies, whereas those experienced 6 years and more used least memory strategies (2,74).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0. Introduction

The study aimed at examining the effect of language learning strategies on students' reading comprehension performances. With this purpose, language learning strategy use and preferences of participating students as well as the relationship between strategy use and reading comprehension performances of participants were examined. The data were obtained, applying the reading comprehension test and Oxford's (1990) SILL for SL/FL learners. Analyses were made using descriptive statistics mean, standard deviation, percentage and the statistical analysis Chi Square test. According to 140 participants' responses to questionnaire items, mean and standard deviation of each strategy was sought to explore students' preferred language learning strategies. Then, Chi Square test was employed to investigate the relationship between students' success and their strategy use as well as looking at the relationship between strategy use and other variables, age, gender, and duration of English study. In this route, results related to each research question were reported respectively. In this chapter, discussions of the analyses will be presented in the same order as the results were provided.

5.1. Discussion of the Results

The analyses were done according to the gathered data from the Turkish version of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's Alpha was used for reliability in order to determine if the parts of the test are consistent internally and was found to have an alpha coefficient of .854, an acceptable figure in the literature. And, the significance level for all tests was determined as $p = .05$ throughout the study to interpret the result. Values lower than 0.05 would be considered significant. Oxford's grouping criteria were adopted in this study to interpret the findings (score 2.4 and below: low; 2.5-3.4: medium; 3.5 and above: high strategy users).

5.1.1 A picture of language learning strategies preferred by participants

Students studying at the Department of English Language and Literature and Preparatory School at Bingöl University were reported to be medium strategy users with the mean score 3.19 according to Oxford's strategy grouping criteria. Students' using strategies at medium level may be linked to their being deprived of strategy training courses. The same finding was common in other studies carried out in EFL contexts such as Rahimi, Riazi and Saif, 2008 in Iran; Noguchi, 1991 in Japan; Park, 1997 in Korea; Wharton, 2000 in Singapore (Rahimi, Riazi and Saif, 2008).

As for subcategories, students tend to use compensation strategies at high frequency level, whereas the rest of the groups were found to be used at medium level. They are listed respectively from the mostly used to the least as metacognitive strategies, social strategies, cognitive strategies, memory strategies, and the least used group affective strategies. The high frequent use of compensation strategies was due to the fact that learners mostly rely on their knowledge to compensate for their inefficient knowledge. Besides, there were possible reasons behind the students' rare preferences of affective strategies. A probable explanation for this low frequent use of affective strategies could be the fact that learners may not be aware of these strategies, although they suffer from foreign language anxiety. Their tension may be due to their low proficiency level. The finding of the study in parallel in some respects with other studies in the literature such as Altunay (2014) and Oxford (1990), which reported rare use of affective strategies among learners.

A detailed examination of sub-categories was presented below:

Memory strategies

According to Oxford (1990), as their key functions stroreage and retrieval of new information, memory strategies enable students to 'store in memory the important things they hear or read in new language, thus enlarging their knowledge base' (58).Among the memory group, creating mental linkages (I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.) was the most used strategy by the learners, while rhyming (I use rhymes to remember new English words.) was the least used one. The finding was consistent with Altunay's (2014) study which reported that the most frequently

used strategy by learners studying at Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, Distance Science Programs was 'I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.', whereas among the least used strategies was 'I use rhymes to remember new English words.'.

Cognitive strategies

The results showed that participants' mostly preferred strategies were 'I say or write new English words several times', 'I try to talk like native English speakers.', and 'I try to find patterns in English.'. This finding showed the same findings in some studies such as Altunay (2014) in which these three strategies were found to be used at highest frequency level among cognitive strategies. 'I use the English words I know in different ways.' was found to be the least used strategy among the group.

Compensation strategies

The compensation strategies were the mostly used strategies among subgroups. The participants were reported to mostly use 'I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.' and 'If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.' However; 'I read English without looking up every new word.' was found to be least used strategy, a finding which was found out in Altunay's (2014) study too. This may be the result of students' not having a good repertoire of vocabulary.

Metacognitive strategies

According to the results, the most frequently used strategy seemed to be paying attention when someone is speaking English. A possible reason for the highly use of this strategy could stem from the fact that they feel anxious about misunderstanding or failure in understanding due to their inefficiency in communicative competence. On the other hand, arranging time for an effective study plan and creating opportunities to read for fun was stated to be the least used strategies. The reason behind the lack of reading habit may be that the students find reading task challenging, because they do not have a good

repertoire of vocabulary as aforementioned. Another possible reason might be that the learners do not a usual habit of reading in their mother toung as well.

Affective strategies

Affective strategies were the least used group within the subgroups. Lowering their anxiety was mostly preferred by the students. On the contrary, writing a language diary was almost never preferred by the learners, a finding which was reported repeatedly in Altunay's studies carried out in 2013 and 2014. The reason may be the fact that students were not proficient enough to convey their experiences in a diary, because of their being deprived of a good amount of vocabulary knowledge and syntactic awareness. Asking questions for verification or clarification was found to be reported highly frequently, however cooperating with other was not commonly used. This may be due to the fear of making mistakes and feeling humiliated in front of other people.

Social Strategies

Social strategies include the last six items of strategies showing learners' ability to interact with people. 'If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.' was found to have the highest mean score (4,14) among this group. On the contrary, 'I ask questions in English.' was shown to be used the least by learners. It could stem from the participants' suffering from speaking anxiety caused by many reasons such as lack of communicaition skills and confidence, low level of language proficiency.

5.1.2 Examining the Relationship between Reading Proficiency and Strategy Use and Strategy Preferences of Learners

The relationship between strategy use and proficiency level was investigated in three phases. In the first step, the effect of overall strategy use on the proficiency level of students was examined. Then, the use of each strategy in the inventory by participants was explored for a more detailed examination of strategy use of the learners. Lastly, both high-

proficiency level and low-proficiency level students' preferred subgroup strategies were explored and compared.

First, the effect of overall strategy use on the proficiency level of students was investigated; however, it was found that strategy using, be it in terms of frequency or the number of the strategies used, was not a strong predictor of success. In other words, students at any proficiency levels tended to use strategies no matter what their proficiency level was. The finding of the study differs from many studies in the literature such as Park (1997), Rahimi, Riazi and Saif (2008), Chamot and Kupper (1989), Griffiths (2007). Park (1997) found out that high proficiency level students utilize strategies more than medium proficiency level students who also use strategies more than lower proficiency level students. Similarly, in their study, Chamot and Kupper (1989) found out considerable differences in the amount of strategies between effective and ineffective students. According to their study's result, high proficiency students were reported to use more strategies and more frequently compared to less proficient students. Besides, they stated that less proficient learners generally failed to apply appropriate strategies to the tasks.

In second phase, use of each strategy in the inventory by participants was explored; as a consequence a more complex and detailed picture came out. Only 7 of 50 strategies were reported to be significantly effective on the success of learners. Besides, 4 of 7 strategies were considered to be directly related to learners' success on reading comprehension. Other 43 strategies were not considered to be significantly linked to determining the proficiency.

It is clear that *item 4* (I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.) was preferred by high-proficiency level participants more often than by low proficiency level participants. The results demonstrate that with p=0,030, a statistically significant difference was found between two groups. Therefore, item 5 can be stated to have an effect on students' proficiency level. A possible reason why this strategy had influenced students's success is that this strategy may enable students to make association new language material thay take in with what they had already in the memory, and thus reinforce the comprehension of the texts (Oxford, 1990). Besides, it helps learner to remember the newly learnerd materials more easily.

Another significant level (p=0,029) appeared between two groups in using the *item 13* (I use the English words I know in different ways.). That the item was found to be used

more frequently by high-proficiency level participants than low-proficiency level ones was a strong predictor of success of students. In other words, high proficiency level students' use of this stategy affected their performance positively.

Item 18 (I first skim an English passage- read over the passage quickly- then go back and read carefully.) was observed to have a statistically significant value p=0,035 which indicated that there was a relationship between students' proficiency level and strategy use. According to the results, high-proficiency level participants (mean. 3,87) used the strategy more frequently than low-proficiency level ones (mean. 3,47). The possible explanation for the higher success of high level students for this strategy is that they develop or learn a strategic behaviour like skimming to get the general idea of the texts quickly and efficiently before concentrating on the details in the texts (Oxford, 1990).

Another strategy was item 22 (I try not to translate word-for-word), which was considered to be a strong predictor of being proficient in reading comprehension. According to the participants' responses to the item, high-proficiency level participants are high strategy users, while low-proficiency level ones use strategy at medium level. A possible explanation for the low level students is that concentrating on words and trying to translate each of them prevent the processing going on in the brain from becoming automatic and simultaneous. Their speed slows down, as they go back and forth between two languages (Oxford, 1990). This causes them not to be able to follow the ideas as a result of word-for-word translation. As a consequence, the reader fails to understand the points intended by the author. Besides, they may think that understanding a text is entirely dependent upon the understanding of individual words (Been, 1975). On the other hand, high level students showed a success in completing the reading task without making this mistake.

Item 24 analyzing expressions (To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.) was determined to be statistically significant being a strong predictor of the participants' reading comprehension success. The results showed that high-proficiency level participants used the strategy at a highly frequency level. On the other hand, low-proficiency level learners used it at medium level. A possible explanation for this may be the fact that it is quite understandable for us not to know every word in a text; however guessing what an unfamiliar word means by dividing it morphological small units gives us a chance to understand it.

The item 27 (I read English without looking up every new word.) was observed to become influential on determining participants' proficiency level. The mean scores showed that high-proficiency level participants used the item at high frequency level; on the contrary low-proficiency level learners used it at medium level.

The last strategy that was found to be statistically significant was item 29 (If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.). It was stated that the item had higher frequency among high-proficiency level participants than it had among low-proficiency level learners. The analysis of data showed that using synonyms to compensate for the lack of knowledge was influencial on students' success rate.

Lastly, in investigating the strategy factors on learners reading comprehension success, exploring and comparing both high-proficiency level and low-proficiency level students' preferred subgroup strategies was thought to possibly provide a reasonable explanation for the relationship between strategy use and reading comprehension level. As an expected consequence, students' choice of subcategories of strategies was found to be a strong predictor of their reading performances. Besides, the findings proved that high-proficiency level students use strategies more often than low-proficiency level students.

High-proficiency level students tended to use compensation strategies at the highest frequency level (mean: 3,80). Then, it was followed respectively by metacognitive strategies (3,42), cognitive strategies (3,35), social strategies (3,27), memory strategies (2,92) and affective strategies (2,78). It is obvious from the findings that high-proficiency level students' preferred subgroup strategies were considered to be a contribution to their success. Low-proficiency level students had almost the same order of using strategies with just a single shift between social and cognitive strategies. They used strategies in this order: compensation strategies (3,51), metacognitive strategies (3,27), social strategies (3,26), cognitive strategies (3,09), memory strategies (2,78) and affective strategies (2,76). The study showed that compensation strategies were the mostly used strategies among both low and high proficiency level students. Put differently, the use of these group strategies did not vary according to the proficiency level of learners. However, the finding was inconsistent with the study conducted by Nergis (2013), who has shown that advanced learners compensate for their weaknesses by the help of strategic knowledge. In other words, she argues that strategic knowledge plays an important role as sources of

compensation in learner's reading performances. When the learner feels incomplete to comprehend the text, he applies the strategies to deal with the comprehension difficulties.

According to the results, it seems that high-proficiency level students used cognitive strategies more often than low-level students. As a consequence, this difference results in a higher success in reading comprehension performances of high-proficiency level students. It means that more use of cognitive strategies was a strong predictor of success in reading comprehension performances of learners. A likely explanation for the reason why cognitive strategies are so influential on predicting student s' proficiency level is that they are effective techniques 'in manipulating and transforming learning materials through . . . practicing, analysing, reasoning and elaboration' (Park, 1997:216). The finding was similar to those reported in previous studies such as Phakiti (2003), Lau & Chan (2007), Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) and Aghaie & Zhang (2012).

Lau and Chan (2007) examined the effects of cognitive strategy instruction on Chinese reading comprehension among Hong Kong low achieving students. After they applied a cognitive strategy instruction program to the experimental group for six weeks, they concluded that the program had a considerable effect on the experimental group learners' reading comprehension performances when compared to the learners in the control group, who received traditional Chinese language instrauction. Similarly, Aghaie and Zhang (2012) implemented a program on Iranian EFL students to evaluate the effects of teaching cognitive and metacognitivie strategies on reading comprehension of learners. Their study concluded that use of strategy enabled learners to be more successful in reading comprehension tasks as well as to be more autonomous. Moreover, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) has confirmed that skilled readers are more successful at applying the cognitive and metacognitive strategies in academic reading texts (Nergis, 2013).

5.1.3. What Strategies Do High and Low -Proficiency Level Prefer to Use?

Exploring the preferred strategies of each proficiency level group was thought to give a different perspective for the research. For this aim, both successful and less successful learners' preferences were examined. As a result, high and low proficiency level students were found out to use strategies at different frequency levels.

High level students were reported to use associating, repeating, practicing with sounds, getting the idea quickly by skimming, reasoning, guessing, using gestures, using synonyms, using linguistic clues to guess the meaning of new words, finding out ways about their language learning, setting goals to be a better learner of English, paying attention and asking for clarificaiton or verification at high frequency level. On the other hand, using flashcards to remember newly learnt vocabularies and writing their experiences in a language diary were used at the lowest level. The rest of the strategies were used at medium frequency level.

Low-proficiency level students used associating, using gestures, predicting the message by the speaker, using synonyms, learning from their mistakes, paying attention, finding out ways about their language learning, lowering their anxiety, asking for clarificaiton or verification and asking for correction at high level according to Oxford's classification (3.5 and above considered highly used group). On the other hand, items using rhymes, using flashcards to remember newly learnt vocabularies, practicing new wocabularies physically and writing their experiences in a language diary were used at the lowest level. They use the rest of the strategies at medium frequency level.

5.1.4 Variables Influential on Strategy Use of Learners

The relationship between the variables gender, age and years of study and strategy use was examined in previous chapter. As a consequence, it was reported that the only variable that showed variation in strategy use was the experience in English study. The other two variables age and gender were found not to have any statistically significant relationship with strategy use.

5.1.4.1 The Relationship between Strategy Use and Gender

In examining the effect of gender on strategy use, no correlation between gender and overall strategy use was found. According to the results, it was reported that males and females used strategies at almost equal frequency levels. In other words, gender was not correlated to overall strategy use. Further, both males' and females' uses of six type of strategies were examined separately. When male participants' use of subgroup strategies

were explored, it was found that compensation strategies was the mostly preferred subgroup among six groups. It was followed by cognitive strategies, social strategies, metacognitive strategies, memory strategies and the least used affective strategies. Results repeatedly showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in males' preferences of strategy groups. In examining females preferred strategies, results showed that their most used strategy groups from top to down were like this: compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, social strategies, cognitive strategies, memory strategies, and affective strategies. According to the results, there was not a statistically significant difference in females' preferences of strategy groups.

When the males and females groups are compared, it can be seen that both groups have almost equal order of strategy use. Similar to males, females also tend to prefer compensation strategies mostly whereas the least used one is affective strategies. There is only a shift in the order: males use cognitive strategies more often than females, while females use metacognitive group more than males.

The result was in consistent with some studies such as Rahimi et al. (2008) and Sung (2011). Rahimi et al. (2008) examined the variables effecting strategy use of Iranian EFL learners, while Sung (2011) conducted a study investigating the influencial factors over Chinese language learners' strategy use. Both studies reported that gender had no effect on learners' overall strategy use. In other words, all participants, be male or female, use strategies at almost the same frequency levels.

While findings in this study related to gender were consistent with studies aforementioned, the findings were not correlated to many other previous studies in the field such as Hashim and Sahil (1994), Oxford and Nyikos (1989), Ehrman and Oxford (1989), Hashemi (2011) and Martinez (2008). For instance, Ehrman and Oxford (1989), women were found to use more strategies than men (Griffiths, 2013). The results also offer no resemblance with another study conducted by Hashemi (2011) who examined the role of gender in strategy use. He found out that females used compensation and affective strategies more than male learners. Another study that contradicts to the current study belongs to Oxford and Nyikos (1989) who reported that female students use certain groups of strategies more than males. The reason behind the contradictory finding of our study could be the fact that participants of the study were English majors who were aware of the

language learning process. This may lead to minimal interference of gender effect on strategy use.

5.1.4.2 The Relationship between Strategy Use and Age

To uncover whether age factor was a strong determinant of strategy use in the study, difference between age groups was investigated. The findings indicate that both older and younger group use strategies at medium level according to Oxford's strategy user categorization. Examining the relationship between overall strategy use and age, it was explored that there is not a statistically significant difference between age groups in strategy use. In other words, the age was not correlated to strategy use. In order to present a more detailed report, preferred subgroups strategies by each age group were also examined. According the results, participants in both groups tended to use compensation strategies at higher frequency levels than they used other strategies. On the other hand, they had a tendency to use affective strategies at the least level. Another important point about the age groups was that older group used metacognitive strategies more than younger group. This finding was partly in line with Peacock and Ho's (2003) study which reported that older learners used memory, affective and metacognitive and social strategies more often than younger learner who in return tended to mostly use social strategies (Altunay, 2014). However, there is not a significant difference between two age groups in using other subgroup strategies in our study.

5.1.4.3 The relationship between strategy use and years of English study

The participants were formerly asked to inform the researcher about how many years they study English intensively disregarding the English courses they took in primary school. According to their responses, whether there is a difference between students' use of language learning strategies and their previous English learning experience was examined. As a consequence, it was reported that in contrast to expectations, less experienced group tended to use strategies more than more experienced ones. This finding indicates that previous English experience was a strong predictor of strategy use in a negative way. In other words, learners' strategy use was at higher frequency level when their years of

experience in English decreased. Furthermore, both groups' subcategory strategy preferences were examined. The findings demonstrated that both groups mostly used compensation strategies. Besides, the least used strategy category of those experienced between 2-5 years was affective strategies, whereas the least used strategy category of those who were experienced 6 years and more was memory strategies.

On one hand, the findings were not consistent with study by Oxford and Nyikos (1989). They found out those learners who had at least five years of experience in English study showed a more frequent use of strategies than less experienced ones. On the other hand, this finding showed parallelism with the study conducted by Rahimi, Riazi and Saif (2008). They found out that the frequency of the use of language learning strategies showed an increase while the number of months that students studied English increased. Their study concluded that the years of English study is a predictor of strategy use, but in a negative way. The contradiction found in the present study could emerge from the fact that experienced students might not report their use of strategy; even they made progress both in proficiency level and strategic competence. A different interpretation of this finding is that increase in the number of years of English study does not necessarily mean an increase in proficiency level of students (Rahimi, Riazi and Saif, 2008). Besides, this finding may be the result of the teaching method through which students studied English applied in their previous schools. The system depends upon the explanation of grammatical rules in almost every high school in Turkey. During their English study, students were taught a very limited number of vocabularies. Reading and writing tasks were undermined, and unfortunately listening and speaking skills were said not to be a matter of concern. The progress that students made most probably occurred during the period of study to enter the university by private learning or during the first year of the university at preparatory class. For that reason, the unexpected result of this study represented the Turkish EFL learning context.

5.2. Pedagogical Implications

Language learning strategies are tools, techniques that enable learners to learn more quicky and effectively as well as to be more autonomous and self-directed learners. Many researches in the field have proved the effectiveness of strategy use on learners' success

such as Mouton (2011) Radwan (2011) and Oxford (2003). Especially for students of English Language and Literature Department, who have to deal with the language, they need extra tools such as strategies to improve themselves in all four skills. Of all four skills, reading is the most essential one at the same time the most demanding and laborious task for students, as they are hand in glove with many books and materials written in English. Besides, it is the easiest way that they have the chance to be exposed to the target language and to have access to many sources of information. However, most of the students have reading comprehension problems. Many studies (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001) have reported that attention to the use of strategies during the reading process helps learners to comprehend easily and to be more productive in various reading context. Studies back up the argument that proficient language learners use larger repertoire of strategies and are more successful in applying the appropriate strategies than their less proficient peers, for instance proficient readers make use of strategies such as monitoring, making intelligent guesses, and establishing ties within sentences, while less proficient readers fail to use many of these strategies. Identifiying the strategies that good readers preferred may present a new perspective for teachers of foreign language teachers. In the present study, the effect of language learning strategies on learners' reading comprehension performances as well as variables influencial on strategy use of learners were investigated through implementing a reading test and the SILL by Oxford (1990). Although overall strategy use was not found to be correlated to a high performance in reading comprehension performances of learners, a detailed examination of the results offered that certain type of strategies had an effect on learners' success. It may not be possible to generalize the results of the study to the other English Language and Literature Departments in Turkey. Nevertheless, the findings may provide, to some extent, teachers, researchers or educaters with ideas about the instruction of language learnings strategies for readers to cope with their reading comprehension problems and to reach an advance level of proficiency.

Before making any claims, it would be appropriate to state some concerns first. It should be firstly noted that all students were consciously or unconsciously apply strategies during the reading process; however neither teachers nor student received any strategy instruction before. Secondly, both high and low level students reported to use compensation strategies at highest frequency levels, while affected strategies were stated to

be used the least. However, it should be noted that language learning strategies contribute to the success of learners as a whole. Another point is that any significant relation between strategy use and variables age and gender was not specified. On the other hand, a negative correlation between years of study and strategy use was stated. That imposes teachers on the instruction of strategy use, as learners are thought to unaware of the strategies they utilize.

In the light of the discussions, the present study could not provide a pattern which would enable us to distinguish high and low proficiency level students, as it was found out in the study that overall strategy use was not correlated to proficiency. However, certain types of strategies were found to be indicator of success among students. Cognitive strategies as well as seven individual strategies were found to be strong indicator of success. Besides, Oxford (1990) states that individual strategies may improve the proficiency level of learners. For that reason, it can be stated that understanding the correlation between reading comprehension and these strategies may enable learners to improve themselves, especially poor ones who need to cope with reading problems they face.

Furthermore, the findings of the study explicitly suggest a strategy training program at EFL contexts to produce strategic learners, in this sense strategic readers. It seems that students were not aware of the language learning strategies; rather they seemed to employ strategies mostly unconsciously. This leads to a need for a strategy traning program to teach learners to apply appropriate strategy for appriate task in the right time. However, teachers should be trained to learn how to implement a strategy program effectively and to assess the strategy use of learners before teaching them to students. Thus, an emphasis should be given to teacher training.

Moreover, factors that may influence the learners' choice of strategy use examined in the study. Although age and gender were found out not to be correlated to stratgey use, years of English study was reported to correlate to strategy use in the negative direction. The variables other than the ones examined in the study such as learning style, motivation, cultural background and attitude may affect the way learners choose and apply strategies. All learners cannot be expected to use the same strategies in the same way; each of them is unique. This proves that it is not only the number of strategies but it is also of great importance to select appropriate strategies for learners' needs and the ability to harmonize

them for the task they deal with or for any context in order to produce desired outcome and to achieve success (Rubin, 1975; Oxford and Nyikos, 1989). Teachers should be aware of that some strategies may be more appropriate for students than the others in different contexts. For that reason, many different of tasks should be presented to learners so that they can apply strategies suitable for them.

Conducting a longitudinal study which involves results before and after the application of a strategy traning program may provide more strong arguments on the relationship between language learning strategies and reading comprehension, and hence contribute to the field. Accordingly, renewed programs and cirricula may be presented in the classrooms.

5.3. Limitation of the Study

The major limitations encountered about the implementation of the study can be stated as the limited number of representatives, the scales, limited time and context of the study.

First, the number of participants was relatively small. Thus, to generalize the results beyond this group does not seem reasonable. Students in diffrent universities from other parts of Turkey may differ in their choice and use of strategies. With a greater number of representative students, divided into two groups as control and experimantal groups, the study could produce stronger results.

Another limitation in the study was related to data collection procedures. The reading comprehension test used to determine the proficiency level of the students was thought to be representative of langugae competency of learners; however, this may lead to underestimating other skills. Besides, gathering data about the strategy use of learners was limited to use of questionnaire because of the time constraints. This led the questionable results in the study, which may be due to the simplicity and straightforwardness of the questionnaire items. Furthermore, such tecniques require the participants' willingness and an ability to describe their internal and invisible behaviours. For that reason, extra data collection tools other than questionnaire like self-reports, interviews etc. could be used to upgrade the reliability of the results.

Finally, the length of time in which the questionnaire and reading test was implemented was another negatives on the part of respondants, as they had to take both of them respectively with only a ten-minute break. They found the time long, and the process tiring. The participants were asked to take both test and questionnarire at one sit so that they could easily remember the techniques they employed. However, they could be given a longer period of time to complete each of them.

5.4. Suggestions For Further Research

In the light of the findings and limitations of the study, the study ponders new ideas and perspectives for the research area. First of all, more studies need to carried out to investigate the strategy use and reading comprehension performances of learners in Turkey thoroughly. Besides, a more comprehensive and longitudinal study involving an experimental and a control group as well as a larger number of represantatives would be replicated. Besides, different data gathering tools such as self-reports, think-aloud protocols or combination of a few of them may be used in further studies.

Another suggestion would be the replication of the study for other English Language and Literature Departments students in Turkey, as this study is confined to specified students of English Language and Literature Department at Bingol University.

Additionally, influencial variables on students' strategy choices such as cultural background, motivation, learning style, attitude, teaching methodology etc. other than gender, age and years of English study need to be examined thoroughly for a better understanding of complex nature of strategy use.

The present study could not provide a pattern which would enable us to distinguish high and low proficiency level students. However, certain types of strategies were found to be indicator of success among students. For that reason, it can be stated that understanding the correlation between reading comprehension and language learning strategies may ponder new perspectives on teaching strategies to learners, especially for poor ones who need to cope with problems they face. In this sense, further research on individual strategies is needed to be done to investigate whether some set of strategies account for the differences between successful and less successful learners in reading skill.

Finally, further research may be carried out to investigate the strategy uses and choices of learners while they read online texts, as computer assisted language learning is not a new phenomenon to the world of language teaching. Rather, learners are more engaged in online texts than they are in traditional text forms nowadays. For that reason, the effect of computer assisted language learning on strategy use of learners as well as learners' strategies in online texts should be investigated.

In conclusion, further studies may offer a more understandable perspective of the relationship between language learning strategies and reading comprehension for English Language and Literature students. Moreover, they would offer results for us to undestand whether learners continue to use or give up using as their proficiency level and competency develop.

5.5. Conclusion

This study offered an examination of the effect of language learning strategies on reading comprehension of English Language and Literature students. The study showed that all students were consciously or unconsciously applied strategies during the reading process. No significant relationship between strategy use and reading comprehension performances of learners was reported. However, high proficiency learners were noted to use strategies more frequently than their less proficient peers. Besides, cognitive strategies as well as some specific strategies were found to be indicator of success among students. Moreover, learners varied in using subgroup strategies: both high and low level students reported to use compensation strategies at higest frequency levels, while affected strategies were stated to be used the least. In conclusion, it was noted that language learning strategies contributed to the success of learners as a whole.

Secondary aim of the research was to investigate whether variables age, gender and years of English study had an effect on learners' choice and use of language learning strategies. Any significant relation between strategy use and variables age and gender was not specified. On the other hand, a negative correlation between years of study and strategy use was stated.

The study contributed to the subject area examining the relationship between strategy uses and reading comprehension. The study urged a strategy program in the light of the

findings in the study. Popularly used strategies by high proficiency learners as well as the variables need to be taken into consideration before planning a training program, which may contribute to the reading performance of learners and enhance their language proficiency in language classes. Teachers also help their students to realize the potential strategies offer to them and make them become aware of the repertoire of the strategies they utilize through strategy inventories. Teachers can also benefit from the study results for a more effective instruction in the classroom.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX- A

READING COMPREHENSION TEST

This test measures your ability to understand an academic passage in English. You will read 2 passages. You will have **40 minutes** to read the passages and answer the questions.

PASSAGE 1

Schizophrenia

(1)Schizophrenia is in reality a cluster of psychological disorders in which a variety of behaviors are exhibited and which are classified in various ways. Though there are numerous behaviors that might be considered schizophrenic, common behaviors that manifest themselves in severe schizophrenic disturbances are thought disorders, delusions, and emotional disorders.

(2) Because schizophrenia is not a single disease but is in reality a cluster of related disorders, schizophrenics tend to be classified into various subcategories. The various subcategories of schizophrenia are based on the degree to which the various common behaviors are manifested in the patient as well as other factors such as the age of the schizophrenic patient at the onset of symptoms and the duration of the symptoms. Five of the more common subcategories of schizophrenia are simple, hebephrenic, paranoid, catatonic, and acute.

(3) 5A(…) The main characteristic of simple schizophrenia is that it begins at a relatively early age and manifests itself in a slow withdrawal from family and social relationships with a gradual progression toward more severe symptoms over a period of years. 5B(…) Someone suffering from simple schizophrenia may early on simply be apathetic toward life, may maintain contact with reality a great deal of the time, and may be out in the world rather than hospitalized. 5C(…) Over time, however, the symptoms, particularly thought and emotional disorders, increase in severity. 5D(…)

(4) Hebephrenic schizophrenia is a relatively severe form of the disease that is characterized by severely disturbed thought processes as well as highly emotional and bizarre behavior. Those suffering from hebephrenic schizophrenia have hallucinations and delusions and appear quite incoherent; their behavior is often extreme and quite inappropriate to the situation, perhaps full of unwarranted laughter, or tears, or obscenities that seem unrelated to the moment. This type of schizophrenia represents a rather severe and ongoing disintegration of personality that makes this type of schizophrenic unable to play a role in society.

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(5) Paranoid schizophrenia is a different type of schizophrenia in which the outward behavior of the schizophrenic often seems quite appropriate; this type of schizophrenic is often able to get along in society for long periods of time. However, a paranoid schizophrenic suffers from extreme delusions of persecution, often accompanied by delusions of grandeur. While this type of schizophrenic has strange delusions and unusual thought processes, his or her outward behavior is not as incoherent or unusual as a hebephrenic's behaviour. A paranoid schizophrenic can appear alert and intelligent much of the time but can also turn suddenly hostile and violent in response to imagined threats.

(6) Another type of schizophrenia is the catatonic variety, which is characterized by alternating periods of extreme excitement and stupor. There are abrupt changes in behaviour, from frenzied periods of excitement to stuporous periods of withdrawn behaviour. During periods of excitement, the catatonic schizophrenic may exhibit excessive and sometimes violent behavior; during the periods of stupor, the catatonic schizophrenic may remain mute and unresponsive to the environment.

(7) A final type of schizophrenia is acute schizophrenia, which is characterized by a sudden onset of schizophrenic symptoms such as confusion, excitement, emotionality, depression, and irrational fear. The acute schizophrenic, unlike the simple schizophrenic, shows a sudden onset of the disease rather than a slow progression from one stage of it to the other. Additionally, the acute schizophrenic exhibits various types of schizophrenic behaviours during different episodes, sometimes exhibiting the characteristics of hebephrenic, catatonic, or even paranoid schizophrenia. In this type of schizophrenia, the patient's personality seems to have completely disintegrated.

Questions

1.The passage states that schizophrenia

a) is a single psychological disorder
b) always involves delusions
c) is a group of various psychological disorders
d) always develops early in life

2. The phrase manifested in in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to

a) internalized within
b) demonstrated by
c) created in
d) maintained by

3. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in paragraph 3? Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.

a) Simple schizophrenia generally starts at an early age and slowly worsens.
b) All types of schizophrenics withdraw from their families as their disease progresses.

c) Those suffering from simple schizophrenia tend to move more and more slowly over the years.
d) It is common for simple schizophrenia to start at an early age and remain less severe than other types of schizophrenia.

4. The word *apathetic* in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to

a) sentimental
b) logical
c) realistic
d) emotionless

5. Look at the four blanks [….] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to paragraph 3.

At this point, hospitalization will most likely be deemed necessary.

Where would be the sentence fit best?

Answer:

6. The word *unwarranted* in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to

a) inappropriate
b) uncontrolled
c) insensitive
d) underestimated

7. The phrase *get along* in paragraph 5 could best be replaced by

a) mobilize
b) negotiate
c) manage
d) travel

8. The author uses the word While in paragraph 5 in order to show that paranoid schizophrenics

a) think in a way that is materially different from the way that they act
b) have strange delusions at the same time that they have unusual thought patterns
c) can think clearly in spite of their strange behavior
d) exhibit strange behaviors as they think unusual thoughts

9. It is implied in paragraph 5 that a paranoid schizophrenic would be most likely to

a) break into unexplained laughter
b) believe that he is a great leader
c) withdraw into a stuporous state

d) improve over time

10. The word *mute* in paragraph 6 is closest in meaning to

a) Asleep
b) Quiet
c) Deaf
d) Frightened

11. The word it in paragraph 7 refers to

a) the disease
b) a slow progression
c) one stage
d) the other

12. It is NOT indicated in the passage that which of the following suffers from delusions?

a) A hebephrenic schizophrenic
b) A paranoid schizophrenic
c) A catatonic schizophrenic
d) An acute schizophrenic

13. Directions: One of the answer choices below is used to describe each of the types of schizophrenia. Complete the table by matching appropriate answer choices to the types of schizophrenia they are used to describe.

Simple Schizophrenia

Hebephrenic Schizophrenia

Paranoid Schizophrenia

Catatonic Schizophrenia

Acute Schizophrenia

Answer Choices (choose 5 to complete the chart):

(1) Sometimes involves behavior that is quite' normal, and even exceptional, and at other times involves delusions that cause negative behavior
(2) Appears suddenly and includes a variety of behaviors from various other types of schizophrenia
(3) Starts at a young age and progresses slowly, moving from withdrawal from society to serious emotional problems
(4) Involves violent behavior during phases of extreme stupor
(5) Involves irrational and irregular behavior on an ongoing basis that makes it impossible to take part in regular social interactions

(6) Is a less serious form of the disease that develops later in life and involves complete disintegration of personality?

(7) Involves drastic changes from extremely quiet and withdrawn behavior to wild and uncontrolled behaviour.

PASSAGE 2

Ketchup

(1) The sauce that is today called ketchup (or catsup) in Western cultures is a tomato-based sauce that is quite distinct from the Eastern ancestors of this product. A sauce called ke-tiap was in use in China at least as early as the seventeenth century, but the Chinese version of the sauce was made of pickled fish, shellfish, and spices. The popularity of this Chinese sauce spread to Singapore and Malaysia, where it was called kechap. The Indonesian sauce ketjab derives its name from the same source as the Malaysian sauce but is made from very different ingredients. The Indonesian ketjab is made by cooking black soy beans, fermenting them, placing them in a salt brine for at least a week, cooking the resulting solution further, and sweetening it heavily; this process results in a dark, thick, and sweet variation of soy sauce.

(2) Early in the eighteenth century, sailors from the British navy came across this exotic sauce on voyages to Malaysia and Singapore and brought samples of it back to England on return voyages. English chefs tried to recreate the sauce but were unable to do so exactly because key ingredients were unknown or unavailable in England; chefs ended up substituting ingredients such as mushrooms and walnuts in an attempt to recreate the special taste of the original Asian sauce. Variations of this sauce became quite the rage in eighteenth-century England, appearing in a number of recipe books and featured as an exotic addition to menus from the period.

(3) The English version did not contain tomatoes, and it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that tomatoes became a main ingredient, in the ketchup of the newly created United States. It is quite notable that tomatoes were added to the sauce in that tomatoes had previously been considered quite dangerous to health. The tomato had been cultivated by the Aztecs, who had called it tomatl; however, early botanists had recognized that the tomato was a member of the Solanacaea family, which does include a number of poisonous plants. The leaves of the tomato plant are poisonous, though of course the fruit is not.

(4) 10A(…) Thomas Jefferson, who cultivated the tomato in his gardens at Monticello and served dishes containing tomatoes at lavish feasts, often receives credit for changing the reputation of the tomato. 10B(…) Soon after Jefferson had introduced the tomato to American society, recipes combining the newly fashionable tomato with the equally fashionable and exotic sauce known as ketchap began to appear. 10C(…) By the middle of the nineteenth century, both the tomato and tomato ketchup were staples of the American kitchen. 10D(…)

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(5) Tomato ketchup, popular though it was, was quite time-consuming to prepare. In 1876, the first mass-produced tomato ketchup, a product of German-American Henry Heinz, went on sale and achieved immediate success. From tomato ketchup, Heinz branched out into a number of other products, including various sauces, pickles, and relishes. By 1890, his company had expanded to include sixty-five different products but was in need of a marketing slogan. Heinz settled on the slogan "57 Varieties" because he liked the way that the digits 5 and 7 looked in print, in spite of the fact that this slogan understated the number of products that he had at the time.

Questions

1. The word *ancestors* in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to

a) predecessors
b) descendents
c) creators
d) ingredients

2. It is NOT stated in paragraph 1 that

a) the Chinese sauce was in existence in the seventeenth century
b) the Malaysian sauce was similar to the Chinese sauce
c) the Chinese sauce was made from seafood and spices
d) the Indonesian sauce was similar to the Chinese sauce

3. The word *it* in paragraph 1 refers to

a) a salt brine
b) a week
c) the resulting solution
d) this process

4. The expression *came across* in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by

a) traversed
b) discovered
c) transported
d) described

5. It can be inferred from paragraph 2 that mushrooms and walnuts were

a) difficult to find in England
b) not part of the original Asian recipe
c) not native to England
d) transported to England from Asia

6. The word *rage* in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by

a) anger
b) distinction
c) misunderstanding
d) fashion

7. The author mentions *The English version* at the beginning of paragraph 3 in order to

a) indicate what will be discussed in the coming paragraph
b) explain why tomatoes were considered dangerous
c) make a reference to the topic of the previous paragraph
d) provide an example of a sauce using tomatoes

8. According to paragraph 3, the tomato plant

a) was considered poisonous by the Aztecs
b) is related to some poisonous plants
c) has edible leaves
d) has fruit that is sometimes quite poisonous

9. The word *staples* in paragraph 4 could best be replaced by

a) standard elements
b) strong attachments
c) necessary utensils
d) rare alternatives

10. Look at the four squares [….] that indicate where the following sentence can be added
to paragraph 4.

It turned from very bad to exceedingly good.

Where would be the sentence fit best?

Answer:

11. The expression *branched out* in paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to

a) contracted
b) stemmed
c) converted
d) expanded

12. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the highlighted
sentence in paragraph 5? Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave
out essential information.

a) Heinz selected a certain slogan even though it was inaccurate because he liked the look
of it.

b) Heinz was eventually able to settle a dispute about which slogan would be the best for his company.
c) Heinz was unable to print out the actual number of varieties, so he printed out a different number.
d) Heinz's company actually had far fewer products than the slogan indicated that it did.

13. Directions: An introductory sentence or a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the FOUR answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage.

This passage discusses the history of a sauce known as ketchup.

-
-
-

Answer Choices (choose 3 to complete the chart):

(1) An English variation of the sauce, without tomatoes, became popular after sailors returned home with samples.
(2) A plant called the *tomatl* is known to have been cultivated by the Aztecs.
(3) A businessman achieved success with the introduction of a mass-produced tomato-based sauce.
(4) The sauce was first developed in Asia, without tomatoes.
(5) The sauce known as *ketjab* was a variation of the Chinese sauce that contained tomatoes.
(6) The American version added the exotic and newly fashionable tomato as a main ingredient.

APPENDIX-B

DİL ÖĞRENME STRATEJİLERİ ENVANTERİ (ESL/EFL)
(R. Oxford, 1990)

Dil öğrenme stratejileri envanterinin bu formatı, ikinci dil olarak ya da yabancı dil olarak ingilizceyi öğrenen öğrencilere yönelik olarak hazırlanmıştır. Cümlelerin, size ne derece tanımladığını 1'den 5'e kadar derecelendirerek (X) işareti koyunuz. Sizi en iyi tanımlayanı seçmeye özen gösteriniz. Herhangi bir sorunun yanlış ya da doğru cevabı yoktur.
(1-Hiçbir zaman doğru değil; 2-Nadiren doğru; 3-Bazen doğru; 4- Genellikle doğru; 5- Her zaman doğru.)

A) Memory Strategies B) Cognitive strategies C) Compensation Strategies D) Metacognitive Strategies E) Effective strategies F) Social Strategies

BÖLÜM A

1	İngilizcede daha önceden bildiğim şeyler ile yeni öğrendiğim şeyler arasında bağlantı kurabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Yeni öğrendiğim İngilizce sözcükleri hatırlayabilmek için tümce içersinde kullanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Yeni öğrendiğim İngilizce sözcükleri hatırlamak için, sözcüğün sesi ile bir imaj ya da görüntü bağı kurarım.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Yeni öğrendiğim bir İngilizce sözcüğü, sözcüğün nerede kullanılabileceğini zihnimde canlandırarak hatırlarım.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Yeni öğrendiğim İngilizce sözcükleri kafiye kullanarak hatırlarım.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Yeni öğrendiğim İngilizce sözcükleri, resimli kartları kullanarak hatırlarım.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Yeni öğrendiğim İngilizce sözcükleri, gruplandırarak zihnimde canlandırırım.	1	2	3	4	5
8	İngilizce derslerimi sık sık tekrar ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Yeni öğrendiğim İngilizce sözcükleri, sayfa, tahta, ya da levhalarda bulundukları yerlere göre hafızamda canlandırarak hatırlarım.	1	2	3	4	5

BÖLÜM B

10	Yeni öğrendiğim sözcükleri, birçok kez söyleyerek ya da yazarak tekrarlarım.	1	2	3	4	5
11	İngilizceyi anadili İngilizce olan insanlar gibi konuşmaya gayret ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
12	İngilizcedeki sesleri öğrenmek için sesleri tekrar ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Öğrendiğim İngilizce sözcükleri farklı yapılarda kullanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Sohbetleri İngilizce olarak başlatabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
15	İngilizceyi, İngilizce programları ya da sinema filmlerini seyrederek öğrenmeye çalışıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
16	İngilizce kitap / gazete vb. şeyleri zevk için okurum.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Not, mesaj, mektup ya da raporları İngilizce olarak yazabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
18	İngilizce bir metni, öncelikle hızlı bir şekilde daha sonra ise başa dönerek daha dikkatli bir şekilde okurum.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Kendi dilimdeki sözcükler arasından yeni İngilizce sözcüklere benzeyenleri bulmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
20	İngilizce cümlelerin yapılarını anlamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
21	İngilizce sözcüklerin anlamlarını, anlamlı parçalara ayırarak çıkartmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
22	İngilizce bir metni ya da konuşmayı sözcük-sözcük tercüme yapmadan bir bütün olarak anlamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Okuduğum veya duyduğum bir bilgiyi İngilizce olarak özetleyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5

BÖLÜM C

24	Bilmediğim İngilizce sözcükleri ilk defa gördüğümde anlamak için tahminde bulunurum.	1	2	3	4	5
25	İngilizce konuşurken bir sözcük aklıma gelmezse, sözcüğü anlatabilmek için el kol hareketlerim kullanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
26	İngilizce kullanırken anlatmam gereken doğru sözcüğü bulamazsam bunun yerine yeni bir sözcük bulmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
27	İngilizce bir metni okurken, bilmediğim her sözcük için sözlüğe bakmam.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Başkası İngilizce konuşurken, konuşan kişinin neler söyleyebileceğini tahmin etmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Eğer İngilizce bir sözcük aklıma gelmezse, aynı anlamlı olan başka bir sözcüğü onun yerine kullanırım.	1	2	3	4	5

BÖLÜM D

30	İngilizcemi kullanabilmek için yapabildiğim kadar çeşitli yollar denerim.	1	2	3	4	5
31	İngilizce kullandığım zaman, yaptığım hatalara dikkat eder ve bunlardan yola çıkarak hatalarımı düzeltmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Biri İngilizce konuşurken, onu dikkatli bir şekilde dinlerim.	1	2	3	4	5
33	Nasıl daha iyi bir İngilizce öğrencisi olabileceğimi öğrenmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
34	İngilizce öğrenmeye yeterli zaman ayırmak için programımı düzenlerim.	1	2	3	4	5
35	İngilizce konuşabileceğim kişileri bulmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
36	İngilizce kitap / gazete vs. okumak için fırsat yaratmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
37	İngilizce becerilerimin gelişmesi için önüme kesin hedefler koyarım.	1	2	3	4	5
38	İngilizce öğrenimimdeki gelişmelerimi değerlendiririm.	1	2	3	4	5

BÖLÜM E

39	İngilizceyi kullanmaktan çekindiğim zaman, rahatlamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
40	Hata yapmaktan korksam bile, kendimi İngilizce konuşmak için cesaretlendiririm.	1	2	3	4	5
41	İngilizce kullanmada başarılı olduğumu hissettiğim zaman, kendimi ödüllendiririm.	1	2	3	4	5
42	İngilizce kullanırken ya da öğrenirken tedirgin olduğumu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
43	İngilizce öğrenimimle ilgili duygularımı (Dil Öğrenme) Günlüğüme yazarım.	1	2	3	4	5
44	İngilizceyi öğrenirken neler hissettiğimi başkaları ile paylaşırım.	1	2	3	4	5

BÖLÜM F

45	İngilizce konuşan birinin söylediklerini anlamazsam, o kişiden daha yavaş konuşmasını ya da söylediklerini tekrar etmesini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
46	İngilizce konuştuğum zaman anadili İngilizce olan kişilerin hatalarımı düzeltmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
47	İngilizceyi diğer arkadaşlarımla /öğrencilerle konuşarak öğrenmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
48	İngilizce öğrenirken anadili İngilizce olan kişilerden yardım isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
49	Sınıfta soracağım soruları İngilizce olarak sorarım.	1	2	3	4	5
50	İngilizce öğrenirken aynı zamanda o dili konuşanların kültürü hakkında da bir şeyler öğrenmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5

CIRRICULUM VITAE

Şermin ARSLAN
Department of English Language and Literature, University of Bingöl, Düzağaç, Bingöl, Turkey
Mobile: 0539 253 82 97
E-mail: srmn.arslan@gmail.com

EDUCATION

BA	Ankara University, Faculty of Humanities English Language and Literature: 2006-2010 (CGPA:3.24/4.00)
English Language Teaching Certificate Program	Selçuk University, 2009-2010
High School	Mehmet Akif Ersoy Grammar High School: 2002-2006 (CGPA:4.72/5.00)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2012- ongoing	University of Bingöl, Department of English Language and Literature • *Research Assistant*
2010-2011	Elazığ Private Gonca Nursery School • *English Teacher*
2009-2010	Ankara Cebeci Elementary School (72 Hours) • *Teacher Trainee*
2007-2013	*Freelance Translator (Education,Tourism,Math,Computer…etc)*

RESEARCH INTERESTS AND OTHER ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

Webinars	1) BC Turkey webinar Oct 2012: Richard Kiely- The learning of new teachers in TESOL 2) BC turkey webinar January 2014: Sylvia Guinan- Social and Emotional Approaches to Teaching with Technology
Research Interests	Teaching English to Non-Native Speakers, Computer-Assisted Language Learning, Teacher Training, Applied Linguistics, Approaches And Methods In Language Teaching, Language Acquisition

RELEVANT SKILLS

- **Computing Skills**: good knowledge of BASIC programming, MS Windows XP and MS Word.
- Keyboard skills (25 wpm).
- **Language Skills**: fluent English, intermediate German and basic Russian.
- Full, clean driving licence.

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Hobbies: Learning Languages, Translating, Travelling, Photography, Playing Guitar

REFEREES

Prof. Dr. Mehmet ÇELİK,
 Mugla Sıtkı Koçman University, Faculty of Education,
Department of Foreign language Teaching
E-mail: **mcelik@hacettepe.edu.tr**

Prof.Dr. E.Sema EGE
Ankara University Faculty of Humanities
English Language and Literature
Phone : 0-312-310 32 80 /1593
e-mail : ege@humanity.ankara.edu.tr

Prof.Dr. Belgin ELBİR
Ankara University Faculty of Humanities
English Language and Literature
Phone: 0-312-310 32 80 /1565
e-mail : elbir@humanity.ankara.edu.tr

Assoc.Prof.Dr. Ahmet KAYINTU
Bingöl University, Faculty of Arts and Letters,
Department of English Langugae and Teaching
Phone : 0-426-2140012/2486
e-mail : akayın76@gmail.com