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Impact of Strategies-Based Instruction on Students' Verbal Communication:

A Case Study of Third Year LMD Students of English at

Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

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RÉSUMÉ

Le but de cette étude était de trouver l'influence des stratégies d'apprentissage sur la communication verbale des étudiants, leurs styles réceptifs de préférence d'apprentissage, et les stratégies d'apprentissage que les étudiants préfèrent utiliser. Les participants étaient au nombre de 23 apprenants de la langue anglaise en troisième année LMD, 6 mâles et 17 femelles. Les instruments utilisés dans cette enquête étaient l'observation directe, le Questionnaire des styles réceptifs de préférence d'apprentissage selon Reid, et l'Inventaire stratégique d'apprentissage des langues de Rebecca Oxford. Les résultats obtenus au moyen d'observation ont montré que les étudiants comptent plus sur les gestes afin de compenser pour le sens des mots. Le test relatif aux styles de préférence d'apprentissage a révélé que les styles majeurs des étudiants étaient kinésthésique, suivi de group, tactile, auditif, visuel, et apprentissage individuel. En ce qui concerne les stratégies d'apprentissage, les recherches ont indiqué que les étudiants emploient le souvent les stratégies métacognitives, suivies de stratégies compensatoires, cognitives, sociales, mémoire liée à des stratégies, et les stratégies affectives qui sont moins utilisées.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at finding the influence of strategy training on students' verbal communication, the perceptual learning style preferences, and learning strategies they prefer to use. The participants were 23 Third year LMD English language learners, 6 males and 17 females. The instruments used in this survey were direct observation, Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire and Oxford's Inventory for Language Learning. The results obtained through observation showed that learners rely more on gestures to compensate for meaning. The learning style preference assessment revealed that the major styles of the students were kinesthetic, followed by group learning, tactile, auditory, visual, and individual learning, style in the classroom. Concerning language learning strategies preferences, the findings indicated that the students use meta-cognitive strategies most often, followed by compensation, cognitive, social, memory, and the least frequently employed were affective strategies.

To my children and grandchildren

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDICES

ix

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Page

EAP   English for Academic Purposes   3

L2   Second Language (used to refer to the new language)   5

CALLA   Cognitive-Language Learning Approach   5

ICT   Information Communication Technology   6

LLS   Language Learner strategies   14

PLSPQ Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire   52

SILL   Strategy Inventory for Language Learning   53

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Impact of Strategies-Based Instruction on student verbal communication: A case study of Third-year LMD students at University Mohamed Kheider, Biskra.

1.1. Introduction

In a world where the pace of development is very fast, high standards are needed in all domains of instruction from school to university level. As far as foreign languages are concerned, the students who have chosen English language for major academic purposes at Biskra university, whose number is increasing year after year, are named "students researchers", who are supposed to work by themselves (which is an interesting idea in its own right) are confused as to how to deal with their individual works and submit them on time. Thus, it is necessary to help language learners (mainly less successful learners) to take their first step towards taking charge of their own learning by accepting full responsibility for the learning process, recognizing that success in language learning depends firstly on themselves rather than on others.

That is, there are many ways to succeed in learning foreign languages i.e., success is not the result of ability only. In fact, language learners can be taught strategies for evaluating their comprehension, the necessary time they will need to study something, and selecting an effective plan to study, or solving a problem(s). Therefore, it is important that language learners benefit from the new teaching methods and techniques in order to exercise more control on their learning.

Among learner-centered approaches that led many second language learners to succees, I suggest to investigate the possibility of implementing strategies-based instruction (SBI) at Biskra

University of Mohamed kheider and examine its effectiveness in language achievement and independence (autonomy) of the English language learners.

1.2. Significance of the study

This study might prove useful to all English language learners since the ultimate goal of strategies-based instruction is to help all language learners to become successful learners. Many studies have shown that the conscious and focused use of second language learning strategies is linked to better achievement and proficiency in the target language (Oxford, 1994). English language learners who are trained in second language strategies use will acquire the necessary skills to have control over their learning which enable them to be more effective. Also, the exposure to learning strategies can stimulate motivation in students because of success they will experience in the target language. Moreover, this study might be valuable to many students who are learning a new language who are seeking assistance and respond to their call for help as to how they can learn English language, or how to revise their lessons, to achieve fluency, and other such issues. In the same way, this study can help the silent students who may have the same problems i.e., learn the target language, but they are embarrassed to reveal it because of shyness or pride. Not only will student benefit from second language strategies training to enhance their potential in the target language, but at the same time they can use these strategies to solve problem outside the classroom and throughout their life time.

In addition, this study might reveal valuable to teachers with regard to their teaching and learning styles, for it may raise their awareness about their ways of teaching in order to adapt their teaching methodology to match the styles of their learners in order to avoid any conflict that may arise in the classroom.

Furthermore, Curriculum designers can also take advantage from this study by dedicating the necessary time needed in order to identify the learning styles and strategies of the learners and the time required for the activities relevant to strategy training.

1.3. Independent and dependent variable

Independent variable (IV): Training in second language learning strategies

Dependent variable (DV): student verbal communication

1.4. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether there is a relationship between training in second language learning strategies and verbal communication of the learners. Also, the study will investigate the learning styles and learning strategies used by third-year LMD students studying English for academic purposes (EAP) at the university of Mohamed Kheider-Biskra.

1.5. Limitations of the study

The study is limited in scope because it is restricted to undergraduate third year LMD students who are intermediate English language learners, but the results of the study may be useful to other similar English language settings. The work is also limited in that because is does not take into account the other individual characteristics of the learners. According to Oxford (1994), there are many other factors that affect the language learning strategies such as gender, age, ethnicity, beliefs, educational level and culture, and learning objectives.

1.6. Statement of the problem

Maintaining a conversation going on in a foreign language is a hard task for many students. Therefore, we believe that training students to use communication strategies can enhance their verbal communicative abilities. This study aims at finding out to which extent leaning strategy training can help third-year LMD students improve their verbal communication.

1.7. Research Questions

- What is the impact of language learning strategies training on student verbal communication?

- What are the learning styles of the students?

- What types of language learning strategies being used by the learners?

1.8. Hypothesis

This study seeks to examine the following hypothesis:

If third-year LMD English language learners are trained in using language learning strategies, their verbal communication will improve.

1.9. Background to study

The field of education has undergone significant changes through years. Many theories, approaches, and teaching methodologies and techniques have been developed in order to provide better education to meet the challenges of the 21 century. In the domain of second language acquisition, researchers suggest that strategy based instruction might help foreign language students to be successful learners. Learning strategies are thoughts and actions that learners undertake consciously in order to achieve a learning goal (Chamot, "Issues in LLS" 17).

Holec, cited by Little D., in an article on learner autonomy, described learner autonomy as the "ability to take charge of one's own learning". According to Holec, this ability is not innate, but should be learned in a "systematic, deliberate way". Most of all, according to his definition, autonomous learners are capable to use their knowledge and skills outside classrooms. We believe that being capable to take charge of one's own learning is not an easy task for the majority of learners of foreign languages. So, this study suggests that target language teachers should assist their students to reach this level of control or autonomy through strategy training.

The application of both learning and communication strategies to classroom learning is called **strategies-Based-Instruction (SBI),** or as **learner strategy (LST) training** or simply teaching student how to learn. Wenden (1985) asserted that learner strategies are the key to

learner autonomy, and language teaching should make it easier to the learners to reach this autonomy. It is important to note that student will benefit from SBI if they understand the strategy itself, perceive its effectiveness, and the strategy presents no difficulty.

In more recent years, research brought evidence of the usefulness of incorporating strategies into the acquisition process: classroom or textbook-embedded training, or Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI), and autonomous self-help training. Both have been demonstrated to be effective for various learners in various contexts. Studies carried out in many countries such as China, Japan, Israel, Egypt, and Russia indicate that SBI and autonomous learning are viable methods which lead to success regardless the cultural differences (q.t.d in Brown, p. 127).

Chamot and O'Malley (1987, 1994b, 1996) created the Cognitive-Language Learning Approach (CALLA), in which declarative knowledge about strategies taught, practiced, transferred, and evaluated so that it gradually becomes procedural knowledge. In CALLA, strategy instruction is combined with L2 instruction and content teaching (math, science, and so on). CALLA has become popular as a model for L2 strategic self-regulation in many countries

In spite of the positive results of strategies-based instruction mentioned above, Chamot (2000) suggests that future research in order to discover how language learning strategies can assist students in becoming more effective. Also, Oxford (1994) states that strategy choice is influenced by many factors, such as learning style, gender, age, and ethnicity, etc.

Hence, this study will investigate the learning styles of the language learners, and examine to extent to which language learning strategies can influence their verbal communication ability.

Researchers (Hurd, 2001; Victor and Lockah, 1995; Wenden, 1999; White, 1995, 1997, 1999) underlie the importance of meta-cognitive strategies and metacognitive knowledge to independent language learning (White, p.8). From these claims, teaching students how to learn is useful. In this respect, this study aims at determining the learning styles preferences of the students and strategies they like using most, and how they handle the use of communication

strategies. This can be considered as the first step toward strategy training because it helps learners know themselves more and think about the learning process, and undertake the necessary actions in order to have more control over their learning.

Zimmerman (1986) views self-regulated learners as "metacognively, emotionally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning". As far as metacognition is concerned, self-regulated learners plan, set goals, organize, self-monitor, and self-evaluate their progress during their learning. Therefore, in order for students to become more effective, teachers need to raise learners' awareness about meta-cognitive strategies and their utility when using them consciously in learning foreign languages.

Investigating learning strategies is important for it can help understand more the link between learning strategies and independence. Pujola (2002) states that independent learners can benefit from information communication technology(ICT) to strengthen their independence by developing their comprehension strategies, using training facilities named Ask-the-Expert which aims at developing meta-cognitive knowledge (qtd. in White, p.8). Thus, teachers should initiate their students to independent learning by showing them hints or strategies in order to improve their communicative ability in the target language through the use of Internet.

Brown (2000) indicates the importance of strategies-based instruction in sensitizing the learners to the importance of taking control over their learning and responsibility for their success and not relying on the teachers to provide everything to them. Brown asserts that "If teachers everywhere would do no more than simply follow his suggestions, significant steps could be made toward encouraging students to make a strategic investment in their own language learning success" (138).

Students can now exercise greater personal control over their own learning, independently of time and place, through multimedia instruction on the Internet. Moreover, the accelerated pace of life and technological development require the students ability for self-directed learning and self-education throughout lifetime .

Brown and Ferrara (1985), cited in Hewitt (2008), state that good learners use more successfully self-regulation than poor students do. So, more assistance from the teachers is needed to help less successful learners develop self-regulation in a given area of knowledge (17). Strategy training focuses on both helping successful learners in using their strategies with increased consciousness and less successful developing awareness about these strategies, and teach them when and how to use a given strategy in different situations.

Scholars, Glaubman et al. (1997) have found that it is useful to integrate metacognitive strategies into instruction that put emphasis on question generation in young children. The authors claim that raising metacognitive awareness, in addition to typical instruction in reading and questioning strategies, can develop self-directed and regulated learners. Meta-cognitive training helps children internalize the strategies they use and promotes an awareness of when and why they are effective. This awareness empowers the ability to transfer the strategies to new situations (33). That is, raising awareness about metacognitive strategies concerns not only higher education, rather all categories of learners can benefit from it.

Vermunt suggests teaching students self-regulated strategies together with didactic measures in order to produce the necessary influence on the mental learning models of the learners to change their views from "reproduction directed" to knowledge construction with the very aim to guide them to self-regulation (qtd. in Hewitt 16). It means that constructive knowledge is more powerful than knowledge based on memorization because the former lasts longer than the latter. Vermunt's view fits the objectives of strategy training which aim at assisting students to construct solid knowledge by appealing to their high order thinking, through using effective strategies, such as summarizing, paraphrasing, note taking, mapping, planning, evaluating, and others.

Hewitt reports that Wood (1998), indicates that in order to be successful in school, learners should develop self-regulation (internal self-support) in many important domains such paying attention, concentrating, organizing, memorizing, acquiring communicative skills

(speaking and writing), evaluating, being able to self-correct and self-instruct, all of which were supported previously by a more proficient assistant (16). In the field of learning strategies, all the mentioned behaviors are types of strategies that can be taught. In the formal setting, the role the instructor is crucial. He/she should possess the necessary background about mental processes, language acquisition process, and the required skills to assist or scaffold his/her learners to control their mental processes.

Borkowski, and Pressley, in press; Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986, 1990), self-regulated learners sees language acquisition as an organized system and controllable process, and they take full responsibility for their achievement (qtd. in Zimmerman 4). This awareness that the language is a system makes good language learners to deal with it not randomly, rather through appropriate strategies according to the task at hand and goals set formerly by the learners. It is necessary for language teachers to provide their students with a basic knowledge regarding second language acquisition process and help them to set achievable goals concerning learning of the new language and evaluate their progress toward the fixed goals.

It is important that the main focus of educational institutions becomes empowering the learners by giving them freedom to control their own learning by teaching them strategies that enable them to move to self-control and independence. In this respect, teachers need to make their students aware about their learning styles and strategies preferences. In doing so, teachers, in their turn, might benefit from being knowledgeable about these characteristics of their students that can help adapt their teaching to the styles of learning of their students.

1.10. Definitions of terms

<u>**Autonomy**</u>:

Wenden (qtd. in Benson, 1997: 41) discusses autonomy as fallows:

In effect, 'successful' or 'expert' or 'intelligent' learners have learned how to learn. They have acquired the earning strategies, the knowledge about learning, and the attitudes that enable them to use these skills and knowledge confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently, of a teacher. Therefore, they are autonomous.

<u>**Self-efficacy:**</u>

Self-efficacy refers to personal beliefs about one's capabilities to learn or perform actions at designated levels (Bandura1986).

<u>**Learning strategies:**</u>

"Learning strategies are the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take in order to achieve a learning goal." (Chamot 17).

<u>**Usage:**</u>

"is one aspect of performance, that aspect which makes evident the extent to which language user demonstrate his knowledge of linguistic rules" (Widdowson 3).

<u>**Use:**</u>

"Use is another aspect of performance: that which makes evident the extent to which the language user demonstrates his ability to use his knowledge of linguistic rules for effective communication" (Widdowson 3).

<u>**Learning style:**</u>

Keefe, cited in Reid, describes learning style as "cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment" (qtd. in Reid 1987).

<u>Modeling:</u>

Is a crucial component in social cognitive theory which has been defined by scholars, such as Rosenthal and Bandura (1978), Shunk (1987, 1998), and Zimmerman (1977) as referring to "behavioral, cognitive, and affective changes deriving from observing one or more models" (qtd. in Schunk, 82).

<u>Self-Regulation:</u>

Self-regulation has been described by Zimmerman as follows:

Self-regulation is not a mental ability or an academic performance skill; rather it is the self-directive process by which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills. Learning is viewed as an activity that students do for themselves in a proactive way rather than as a covert event that happens to them in reaction to teaching. Self-regulation refers to self-generated thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are oriented to attaining goals ("Theory into Practice"65).

1.11. Overview of Chapter One

The current chapter presents an introduction to this exploration that has been undertaken by the researcher. it provides a background on the language learning strategies and their crucial role in language proficiency and independence. Then, the purpose of the study is indicated along with the statement of the problem. Next, the significance of the study, followed by its limitations is reported.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This exploration is based on a desire to enhance classroom methodology and mainly develop autonomous language learners. Teachers of languages in the information age should aim at raising achievements and we believe that improved learning is linked to improved teaching, which is the product of better understanding of language learning process, the specificities of the learners and the innovative methodologies that provide the learners with the necessary tools or strategies to direct their learning more effectively with the very aim to lead the students to self-regulation and autonomy.

2.2. Defining learning strategies

2.2.1. Definitions:

Learning strategies are defined by many scholars in different ways. For example, Weinstein and Mayer (1986) have defined learning strategies as "behavior and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning". Other researchers, Riding and Rayner (1998) have defined learning strategies as "a set of one or more procedures that an individual acquire to facilitate the learning performance on a learning task."

Schmeck (1988) describes some significant aspects of learning strategies by stating that they are conscious decisions taken by the learner to employ some skills in situations which require learning. In the same way, Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986) indicate that learning strategies are used for a purpose and are goal oriented, but not necessarily conscious or deliberate.

Other researchers such as Resnick and Beck (1976) distinguished between general strategies which are linked to thinking and reasoning, and mediational strategies which refer to specific skills used in order to achieve a task (though it is not very easy to differentiate between what is general and specific when we refer to thinking processes). In the same way, Butterfield

and Belmont (1977) state that there are what we call "control processes" which have to do with the processing of information available and "executive functions" which allow the learner to check, evaluate, revise or change these functions.

It is clear that these definitions of learning strategies are based on the cognitive science which assumes that learning involves information processing by human individuals. That is, learning strategies are used in all learning including mathematics, language, history, and so on.

2.2.2. Language learner strategies (LLS)

Strategies are specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving particular and planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information. They might vary according to the context. Strategies are those specific attacks that we make on a given problem. They are the techniques that we employ to solve problems posed by second language input and output. Strategies can be divided into two main categories: learning strategies, and communication strategies (Brown 122).

A learning strategy can be defined as specific plan, action, behavior, step, or technique that individual learners use, with some degree of consciousness, to improve their progress in developing skills in a second or foreign language. Such strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language and are tools of greater autonomy (Cohen 48).

Oxford suggests that second language (L2) learning strategies are specific behaviors or thought processes that students use in order to enhance their own L2 learning. "The word strategy comes from the Greek word strategia which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war. The warlike meaning of strategia has fortunately fallen away, but the control and goal-directedness remain in the modern version of the word" (GALA 2003 8).

Scarcella & Oxford (1992, p. 63) defined language learning strategies as "specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques -- such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task -- used by students to enhance their

own learning" . When the learner is able to consciously choose strategies that fit his or her learning style and the L2 task at hand, these strategies become a useful tool for active, conscious, and purposeful self-regulation of learning.

Strategies can be divided into two main categories: learning strategies, and communication strategies (Brown 122). Learning strategies refer to the way people process, store and retrieve information whereas communication strategies deal with output i.e. the production of language and the delivery of messages to others. Learning strategies have been classified by Oxford into six groups: cognitive, meta-cognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective, and social (Oxford, "GALA" 12).

Language learning strategies are the techniques, procedures, actions, plan of attack selected by the learner to learn the target language, facilitate a learning task or solve a problem(s) faced when learning or using the target language. These strategies can be thought of as tools that are used by the learner who chooses appropriate one according to the situation, with the aim to complete a given language task successfully.

Rubin (1975) investigated what 'good language learners' did to facilitate their learning. As a result, she discovered that they have many learning strategies in their possession. She found that good language learners are accurate guessers who have a strong desire to communicate, and will attempt to do so even at the risk of appearing foolish. They pay attention to both meaning and form of their messages. They also practice and monitor their own speech and the speech of others.

According to Cohen, claims made by authors in the field of LLS can be listed as follows:

1. The strategies used by learners are identifiable and can be described

2. A strategy is a construct that can be defined, and what it is and what it does can be described in practical terms.

3. Strategies are important because they are associated with successful learning.

4. Some learner types are likely to use strategies or use them more successfully than other learner types.

5. Strategies can be taught and learner, as a result, can develop more effective strategic behavior (Cohen 27).

From the description and definitions of language learner strategies mentioned, it is necessary for teachers to make their students aware about these mental tools and their utility in learning foreign languages. Since strategies can be taught, as scholars have been claiming, L2 learners should be assisted in using them more successfully in L2/FL acquisition and other situations.

2.3 Types of learning strategies

2.3.1 Types of learning strategies according to O'Malley et al.

According Michael O'Malley and Anna Chamot and colleagues, there are basically three categories of strategies that are used by learners of English as a second language in the United States:

- Metacognitive strategies,

- Cognitive strategies,

- Socioaffective strategies.

Metacognitive strategies refer to information processing theory to mean planning for learning, thinking about learning process, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed.

Cognitive strategies refer to specific learning tasks and involve the material to be learned. For example, replaying a word or phrase mentally, outlining and summarizing what has been learned from reading and listening, and using keywords (Freeman 164).

Socioaffective strategies refer to activity and interaction with others i.e. the learner look for opportunities to practice the L2 with others by cooperating with them to share information and complete a task.

Table 1: Learning strategies (O'Malley et al. 1985b: 582-584)

Learning Strategy		Description
Metacognitive **Strategies**	Advance Organizers	Making a general but comprehension preview of the organizing concept or principle in an anticipated learning activity.
	Directed Attention	Deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and to ignore irrelevant distracters.
	Selective attention	Deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of language input or situational details that will cue the retention of language input.
	Self-Management	Understanding the conditions that help one learn and arranging for the presence of those conditions.
	Functional Planning	Planning for and rehearsing linguistic components necessary to carry out an upcoming language task.
	Self-Monitoring	Correcting one's speech for accuracy in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, or for appropriateness related to the setting or to the people who are present.
	Delayed Production	Consciously deciding to postpone speaking in order to learn initially through listening comprehension.
	Self-Evaluation	Checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against an internal measure of completeness and accuracy.
	Repetition	Imitating a language model, including overt practice and

		silent rehearsal.
Cognitive **Strategies**	Resourcing	Using target language reference materials
	Translation	Using the first language as a base for understanding/or producing the second language.
	Grouping	Reordering or reclassifying, and perhaps labeling the material to learned based on common attributes
	Note Taking	Writing down the main idea, important points, outline, or summary of information presented orally or in writing
	Deduction	Consciously applying rules to produce or understand the second language
	Recombination	Constructing a meaningful sentence or larger language sequence by combining known elements in a new way
	Imagery	Relating new information to visual concepts in memory via familiar, easily retrievable visualizations, phrases, or locations
	Auditory Representation	Retention of the sound or a similar sound for a word, phrase, or longer language sequence
	Keyword	Remembering a new word in the second language by (1)identifying a familiar word in the first language that sounds like or otherwise resembles the new word and (2) generating easily recalled images of some relationship between the new word and the familiar word
	Contextualization	Placing new information to other concepts in memory
	Elaboration	Relating new information to other concepts in memory.

	Transfer	Using previously acquired linguistic and/or conceptual knowledge to facilitate a new language learning task.
	Inferencing	Using available information to guess meanings of new items, predict outcomes, or fill in missing information.
Socio-affective Strategies	Cooperation	Working with one or more peers to obtain feedback, pool information, or model a language activity.
	Question for Clarification	Asking a teacher or other native speaker for repetition, paraphrasing, explanation, and/or examples.

In his book Language Learner Strategies, Cohen reports that O'Malley and Chamot (1990) indicated that knowledge of strategies, like second language knowledge itself, develops from declarative to procedural through practice by learners.

Declarative knowledge is defined as conscious, fact oriented, knowledge discrete data points of facts, such as definitions of words, the conventions of punctuation, or grammar rules.

As to procedural knowledge, it is unconscious knowledge which is automatic, habitual, effortless, and implicit, for example, understanding a word without thinking of its definition, or using grammar automatically (Cohen 50).

Language learning strategies are not mere hints showed by the teacher and used by the students to solve a problem relevant to language, but need to be presented following steps. That is, strategies are explicitly introduced, demonstrated and modeled by the teacher. Then, the students will be trained through practice and activities until they can use these techniques automatically or know the procedure very well and be able to adapt them in new settings .This is what might be called autonomy and independence.

2.3.2.. Oxford's types of language learning strategies (LLS)

In her taxonomy, Oxford has identified a detailed list of LLS which can briefly be summarized as follows:

Table 2: Summary of Oxford's list of language learning strategies

Direct language learning strategies (LLS)	Indirect language learning strategies (LLS)
Memory strategies Cognitive strategies Compensation strategies	Meta-cognitive strategies Affective strategies Social language learning strategies

Given the utility of strategies in language learning, it is important for the teachers to initiate their students to try out simple strategies. Concerning, for example, asking questions, learner might ask questions such as "Do you mean …?" or "Did you say that…?" in order to clarify or check what they think they have heard or understood. These questions appear to be easy, but many English language learners are unable, feel shy and hesitating to use them. So, it is important for teachers to make their students aware of the usefulness of these strategies and train them in using these strategies whenever they feel that they have not heard or understood a word or an expression.

2.4 Communication strategies:

Communication strategies have to do with the output, or the production of information. We can distinguish two types of communication strategies: avoidance strategies, and compensatory strategies.

2.4.1 Avoidance strategies:

The most common type of avoidance strategy is syntactic or lexical avoidance within semantic category. See the example bellow:

2.4.1.1 Lexical avoidance:

L: I lost my road.

NS: You lost your road?

L: Oh… I lost. I lost. I got lost.

We can notice that the learner avoided the lexical item road completely because he could not find the word way at the moment.

2.4.1.2. Phonological avoidance:

It occurs when the speaker does not know the pronunciation of a word.

2.4.1.3. Topic avoidance:

This means that a whole topic of conversation is avoided, for example, when talking about something we did in the past and one does not master the past tense. There are many methods of topic avoidance such as changing the subject, seeming not to understand, or not responding at all, or abandoning a message when an idea is too difficult to express.

2.4.2. Compensatory strategies:

In addition to avoidance strategies, learners use many strategies to compensate for missing knowledge, for instance, the learner describes or exemplifies the target object he/she does not know the exact name.

The best way to illustrate communication strategies is through Dörnyei's classification presented in the following table:

Table 2.3: Communicative Strategies (adapted from Brown2000: 128)

Avoidance Strategies

1. Message abandonment: leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties.

2. Topic avoidance: Avoidance topic areas or concepts that pose language difficulties.

Compensatory Strategies

3. Circumlocution: Describing or exemplifying the target object of action (e.g., *the thing you open bottle with* for *corkscrew*).

4. Approximation: Using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (e.g., *ship* for *sailboat*).

5. Use of all-purpose words: Extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (e.g., the overuse of *thing, stuff, what-do-you-call –it, thingie*).

6. Word coinage: Creating a nonexistent L2 word based on a supposed rule (e.g., *vegetarianist* for *vegetarian).*

7. Prefabricated patterns: Using memorized stock phrases, usually for "survival" purpose (e.g., *Where is the* ____or *Comment allez –vous?*, Where the morphological components are not known to the learner).

8. Nonlinguistic signals: Mime, gesture, facial expression, or sound imitation.

9. Literal translation: Translating literally a lexical item, idiom, compound word, or structure from L1 to L2.

10. Foreignizing: Using a L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonology (i.e., with a L2 pronunciation) and/or morphology (e.g., adding to it a L2 suffix).

11. Code-switching: Using a L1 word with L1 pronunciation or a L3 word with L3 pronunciation while speaking in L2.

12. Appeal for help: Asking for aid from the interlocutor either directly (e.g., *What do you call…* ?) or indirectly (e.g., rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression).

13. Stalling or time-gaining strategies: Using filters or hesitation devices to fill pauses and to gain time to think (e.g., *well, now let's see, uh, as a matter of fact*).

2.5. Strategies-Based-Instruction

The application of both learning and communication strategies to classroom learning is called **strategies-Based-Instruction (SBI),** or as **learner strategy training (LST)** or simply teaching student how to learn. Wenden (1985) asserted that "learner strategies are the key to learner autonomy, and language teaching should make it easier to the learners to reach this autonomy". It is important to note that student will benefit from SBI if they understand the strategy itself, perceive its effectiveness, and the strategy presents no difficulty.

Weinstein et al. (2000) indicate that learning strategies have three main characteristics: They must be goal oriented, intentionally invoked and effortful.

According to Weinstein, cognitive learning strategies do not operate alone i.e., they are under control of the learner who knows the what, how and when to implement a strategy. Also, the learner is knowledgeable about the importance of a given strategy. In addition, the student understands the chosen strategy and that he/she want to use it rather than another one. In other words, understanding about learning strategies is not enough in order to be an effective learner. That is to say, the learner must know the right strategy that can help him/her to complete the task at hand (depending on the situation), how to apply and when to use it in an appropriate way.

2.5.1. Usefulness of L2 strategies

Oxford (1990) indicates that the usefulness of a strategy depends on three main conditions:

1. The strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand,

2. The strategy fits the particular student's learning style preferences to one degree or another, and

3. The student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies.

Allwright (1990) and Little (1991), learning strategies can also help learners to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learners. Strategies that obey these criteria "make

learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (8).

2.5.2 Suggestions for strategy instruction:

Oxford (2006a) proposed the following suggestions for strategy instruction:

1. Choose strategies to teach on specific L2 tasks and learners' needs.

2. Use easy-to-remember strategy names and descriptions, and ask students to call strategies by name, for example, 'Underlining key points in the text'.

3. Explain that strategies help learners do a language task more effectively and efficiently.

4. Demonstrate how to use a relevant strategy while doing a language task.

5. Ask students to demonstrate strategies that work for them.

6. Encourage students to share useful strategies with each other with references to specific tasks.

7. One every few weeks, ask young students to decorate a 'strategy bulletin board' that shows their favorite strategies.

8. Weave strategy instruction into regular language teaching, and always refer explicitly to the strategy, so that students will not think it is an additional task.

9. Give students opportunities to practice strategies in class and at home to make their learning easier, and ask how well the strategies worked for them.

10. Remind students to transfer a given strategy to a new language task to which the strategy is relevant, and if necessary demonstrate how. Later ask how successful the transfer was.

11. Explain that although certain strategies are more comfortable (i.e., related to a student's preferred learning style), it is good to try less comfortable strategies if they aid in completing the task (qtd. in Cohen 51).

Since teachers are facilitators, they can implement strategy based instruction in their classes in order to make learning easier an enjoyable to their students and help them to self-

23

regulate their learning by applying the "believing game" and trying out new ideas an innovative methods suggested by renamed experts in the field of teaching and learning.

2.5.3. Objectives of learning strategies

Learners often think that success in learning a foreign language is a question of endowment and wrongly attribute competence to natural ability, luck, and other factors such as having a good teacher or poor teacher all of which are out of control of the students. Rarely, learners attribute academic achievement to effort or any other effective strategies. These beliefs develop through long time, and changing these false thoughts is a hard work. However, strategies instruction can help them change their untrue thoughts.

The objective of learning strategies instruction is to assist student in developing awareness of their own meta-cognitive processes and thus control their own learning. Learners who are aware of their own learning processes, strategies, and preferences are able to regulate their actions to meet their own goals. In other words, they become more independent and self-regulated learners.

2.5.4. Implementing language learning strategies instruction

Before its implementation, SBI requires planning, and preparation on the part of teacher and students as well. The first phase is to create the groundwork or foundation i.e., a learner-centered classroom that is ready for strategies instruction.

A learner-centered classroom is an environment that creates and foster independent students, who are aware of their learning processes and who, through this awareness, are able to take control over their learning. A learner-centered classroom must be created by the teacher and then accepted by the student. It does not create itself.

Learner-centered approaches look at learners as individuals who are responsible for their learning an respect them. In order to develop language learners independence, many means have

been developed with the aim to raise learners' awareness about themselves, their learning needs and preferences, their beliefs, motivations, and the strategies they employ to improve their learning and acquire the necessary qualification in the new language.

2.6. The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA)

The cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is an instructional model that integrates current educational trends in standards, content-based language instruction, learning strategies, and portfolio assessment. The CALLA model presents explicit instruction in learning strategies to facilitate content and language learning and aims at helping students to become independent learners. The CALLA instructional framework (Chamot and O'Malley, 1994) is an effective way to plan learning strategies instruction that consists of five phases:

1) Preparation

Students prepare for strategies instruction by identifying their prior knowledge about and the use of specific strategies.

2) Presentation

The teacher demonstrates the new learning strategy and explains how and when to use it

3) Practice

Students practice using the strategy with regular activities of moderate difficulty

4) Evaluation

Students self-evaluate their use of the learning strategy and how the strategy is working for them

5) Expansion

Students extend the usefulness of the earning strategy by applying it to new situations or learning tasks (Chamot et al., 1999 7).

All these phases aim at involving the students in the learning process in order to build a solid knowledge by linking new information to previous one in long term memory through the use of effective strategies.

Learning strategies challenge the students not only to memorize, but to ask questions, interpret, debate the material of the course, evaluate their performance, and create. When the students are involved in the course through different activities, they are more likely to learn the material most "fully and usefully". Citing Gardner (1993) and Marzano (2001), Crawford states that learning fully and usefully means that learners can think about what they learn, apply the new knowledge in real situations, and can further their learning independently (1).

Perceiving information through more than one sense makes it easier to recall the new knowledge. For example, Koutstaal et al. (1997) state that when the brain perceives information repeated in different ways, this makes encoding of that information more efficient. For example, writing a vocabulary word in a sentence, hearing classmates read their sentences, and then following the direction to use the word in conversation during the same day will result more efficient storage in long term memory and retrieval of the information that rote memorization. (qtd. in Willis, 2006: 29). This fits the philosophy of strategy based instruction suggested in this exploration to make use of different activities that aim at high thinking levels beyond a mere remembering.

2.7. Characteristics of effective learners

According to Goldman and Rakestraw (2000), Kintsch (2004), students are not just processing information passively, but participate actively in building meaning through the use of their previous knowledge and experiences in addition to various aspects of texts. Zimmerman and Clearly (2009) argue that students possessing a significant ability for controlling their own learning, are capable to set goals, direct their leaning, and choose strategies that allow them to successfully complete a task. These skills do not only help achieve success at schools but can be used to ensure a lifelong learning as claimed by Boekaerts (2009) and Ryan & Deci (2009) (qtd. in OECD 77).

In Hacker's (2004) view, effective learners have assiduity to practice, like practicing, and process information in an efficient manner. In order to do so, students need to be able to make relation between the new information to what have been learned or previous knowledge, and to have the capacity to put into practice the new material to real situations. Good learners have a great deal of strategies at their disposal, and are flexible in using them. We can assume then, if a learner find it difficult to learn by themselves, lack access to effective strategies to assist them when learning or they fail to choose the ones that fit more to the problem to be solved.

It worth to mention that in a recent study which has been undertaken by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it is found that OECD countries where students are more knowledgeable about effective strategies to understand and remember information are Germany, Italy, Estonia, Belgium and Switzerland. Among OECD countries, where student are least knowledgeable about the mentioned strategies we can cite Mexico, Turkey, and the United States (qtd. in OECD, 2010 77).

Students need to be initiated to independent learning and its usefulness as opposed to passive learning in which the teacher is the center and the main source that provides knowledge. Today, students can have more control over their own learning through multimedia instruction on the Internet. Moreover, they can educate themselves during the whole life time. Therefore, schools may need to put emphasis on how can students direct and exercise control over their learning with the aim to help them develop effective strategies in order the achieve academic success and continue self-education and self-renewal along lifetime.

Third-year Students of English as a foreign language are still hesitant, and are uncomfortable to express themselves in English. Teachers have an important role to play in developing students' language learning strategies with the very aim to help them to become more effective learners. That is to say, they can apply the necessary classroom techniques in order to motivate their students and increase their interest in learning English. Most importantly, in addition to teaching language, teachers should show learners how to learn or different language

learning strategies and how they can use them appropriately according to their learning styles and the task to be completed.

2.8. Importance of learner autonomy

Feeling free in one's own action is considered as a crucial need of all people because feeling free can influence our motivation and, at the same time, is influenced by the latter. To put it another way, autonomous learners empower their motivation when they accept to take responsibility for their learning through reflection and actions in order to direct their learning. These qualities of being motivated and aware about one's thoughts are powerful tools that lead autonomous learners to success. This success, in its turn, consolidates the language learners' intrinsic motivation. Moreover, it is assumed that autonomous learners are able to put into practice their knowledge outside the classroom according to new situations. Hence,

It is worth to mention that autonomy does not mean that students learn alone without an instructor. According to Macaro (1997), learning in collaboration with others is also considered as autonomy since the students are given more freedom or role to control their own learning (qtd. in McCafferty et al. 26).

In other words, autonomy in language learning is linked to the extent to which language learners use the language, that is, we can learn to speak by speaking, to write by writing, to read by reading and so forth. This means that autonomy in language learning is determined by what the learner can do in the target language in order to improve their skills.

2.8.1. Autonomy in formal language learning

According to Little D., autonomy in language learning can be promoted through three basic pedagogical principles which are:

Learner involvement: engaging learners to share responsibility for the learning process which corresponds to affective and the metacognitive dimension.

Learner reflection: assisting students to think critically during each phase of planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning (the metacognitive dimension)

Appropriate target language use: using the target language as the principle medium of language learning i.e., the communicative and the metacognitive dimension.

These three principles are put into practice by the teachers who should do the following:

1. Use the target language as the preferred medium of classroom communication and requires the same of the learners,

2. Involve the students in a non-stop quest for good learning activities, which are shared, discussed, analyzed, and evaluated with the whole class,

3. Help his/her learners to set their own learning targets and choose their own learning activities which should be discussed, analyzed and evaluated in the language being learned.

4. Require their students to identify individual goals, but reach them by working collaboratively in small groups,

5. Require their learners to write down and have records of their learning (lessons, projects, and anything produced by the learners themselves).

6. Engage their learners in regular evaluation of their progress as individual learners and as a group (in the target language). (Little "Learner Autonomy")

2.8.2. Wenden's view on meta-cognitive knowledge and autonomy

In her research, Wenden (1998), cited in Benson, presents the following suggestions: Teachers should also aim to help language earners develop a more reflective   and self-directed approach to learning their new language. For the greater part, language instructors will view their goal as the provision of instruction that facilitates the development of linguistic autonomy. However, this research suggests that learners also need guidance in improving and expanding their knowledge about learning so that they may also become more autonomous in their approach to the learning of their new language. For this purpose, the following four

procedures that define awareness raising activities for (metacognitive) knowledge acquisition may be used as a guide in creating tasks and materials for language learners.

1) elicitation of learner's metacognitive knowledge and beliefs

2) articulation of what has come to awereness

3) confrontation with alternative views

4) eflection on the appropriateness of revising, expanding, one's knowledge.

 (qtd. in Benson, p. 96).

These suggestions fit the objective of this study which aims at identifying learning styles and strategies that the learners like using most, addition to their influence on speaking skill.

In his book on autonomous language learning, Benson reports that Wenden (1995) argues that the use of planning, monitoring, and evaluation (which are identified as three main strategies in the literature on autonomy in language learning and self-regulation in learning) "does not in itself define autonomy." Referring to Perkins and Salomon (1989), she asserts that these three strategies are weak if they were not employed with a "rich knowledge base" namely metacognitive knowledge which consists of person, strategic and task knowledge (p. 96).

Little (1997), cited in Benson, observes that the main concern of developing autonomy in language learning is 'to enable learners to maximize their potential for learning via critical reflection and self-evaluation, and to enable them to become independent and self-reliant users of their target language' (qtd. in Benson 98). In this respect, this study will explore the styles preferences, their preferred strategies they are using (as first steps) before strategy training, hoping that by leaving some control (teaching them how to learn) over their learning, the students will make their first step towards autonomy.

2.9. Learning Styles

In commonly known that students in any classroom have different strenghs and weaknesses. In the domain of language teaching and learning, some of these differences have

been attributed to their style of learning. for example, there are students who are visual learners who learn better through eyes or seeing the material presented to them, whereas others prefer listening to lectures in order to acquire knowledge. Still, others can learn equally well, regardless the material is being presented. However, researchers, Liven et al. (1974), cited in Freeman (2007), have found that up to 25 percent from a group of learners, the way of teaching them "does make a difference in their success as learners (169).

Leaning styles refer to an individual's preferred way of picking up, processing and remembering new information and skills that predominate in all situations independently of the teaching methods used or subjects dealt with.

Many teachers reproduce their own way of learning i.e., what worked best for them when they were in school, and select teaching methods that fits their own way of approaching new information. For example, a teacher who is field dependent (who likes working in a group) will easily incorporate group work in his/her teaching, whereas those who preferred learning alone (field independent) are unlikely to create opportunities for their students to share classroom activities with their peers. Consequently, learners whose learning styles and preferences match those of their teachers will do very well in school, while the ones whose learning styles are different from their teachers' ones will do less they could have done if their styles were matched. Therefore, it is necessary for the teachers to know about the various styles that learners bring into their classrooms, respect these styles and preferences, and tailor their teaching to match these individual characteristics of their students in order to leave no one learner behind.

2.9.1. Learning styles progression

People develop their learning styles over time, that is, there is a progression of learning styles from early age till adulthood. Thus, kids learn through touching. They usually acquire the ability to learn through seeing by the age of ten. The ability to learn exclusively by listening is generally attained with the age of fifteen. So, teachers should compensate for the visible lack of auditory skills of their pupils by introducing a lot of visual and tactile aids and make use of teaching methodologies that take into account such insufficiencies.

It is known that people learn better when information is received by means of several senses (more than one sensory channel). Therefore, teachers should make use of teaching techniques that target more than one sensory channel of the learners such as overheads projectors, videos, hand-outs, pictures, etc…

2.9.2. Styles and good language learners

It is worth noticing that respecting and matching teaching styles does not necessarily mean that teachers should teach only in the preferred modes of their students. Instead, teachers should help their learners to build their skills even in their less preferred styles if they want their students to develop the adequate mental ability to higher achievement and proficiency. Hence, when teaching students how to learn a language it is necessary to show them that styles of learning have advantages and disadvantages and sometimes they have to change their habits of learning if they want to be good language learners.

For example, a student who is reflective i.e., whose style makes him/her think too long before saying something should be made aware of the benefits of risk taking (communicative strategy) when communicating with others because thinking to the whole message they want to convey, the grammar they will use, the pronunciation of the words they have to utter will take long time (long pause) which is not convenient in conversations. In the same way, impulsive learners should be taught how to control themselves (monitoring strategy) by reflecting on what

they want to express and correct it mentally for an accurate production if they want to belong to the category of good language learners.

Research has shown that matching learning styles of the students improves their achievement, interests, and motivation (Smith and Renzulli, 1984). Many authors (Dunn, Dunn and Price 1979) state that by adapting teaching methods to students styles can result in enhanced performance. Other researchers such as Gagne (1993) and Kinsella (1996) have found that some teaching principles can increase learning. They claimed the existence of relationship between matching the learning styles of the students through the use of appropriate instruction can lead to effectiveness in learning.

Learning styles have been by many authors in educational psychology and different Learning Styles Models have been developed such as Kolb's Learning Style Model, Myer-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the Fedder-Silverman Learning Style Model and Dunn's Model. All four learning styles models have a lot in common. For example, all of them view learning styles as having two poles, that is, a scale with an extreme preference in both ends. Also, all the Models point that learning styles should not be confused with intelligence.

As far as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is concerned, it is based on four scales each of which has two different preferences. The latter are like what is called 'right' or 'left-handedness' which can be explained like this: we might prefer to make use of our right hand to write our name. We do this automatically without any effort. By contrast, if we try to use our left hand, we will find the task more challenging and needs some training. In other word, we use both our hands all the time, but naturally each person likes using one hand more than the other one. Learning styles work in the same fashion. We use both preferences at different times, but not at the same time, and frequently not equally well. Hence, teacher guidance in order to develop self-awareness and strategies of their students is necessary (Brown, "strategies" viii).

Given the above characteristics of learning styles and their importance in learning, in is crucial that this study takes into account the learning styles of the language learners and their

preferences. In fact, Oxford highlights that language learning strategies use "is significantly related to L2 learning motivation, learning style, gender, age, culture, brain hemisphere dominance, career orientation, academic major, beliefs, and the nature of the L2 task" (Oxford, "GALA" 15).

Stevick (1989) has described in an interesting manner differences among successful language learners in his book entitled 'Success with foreign languages-seven who achieved it and what worked for them'. In the preface of the book, he states:

When I began the interviews, I was hoping to find out what the successful language learners did alike. If we could teach their secrets to our students, I thought then everyone else would become as successful as the people I had talked with. It soon becomes apparent, however, that learners are even more different from one another than I had expected. Success with foreign languages, I found, does not come by one simple formula (xi).

Stevick's research reveals that there is no single way to succeed in leaning foreign language. Hence, students have to take the most of their preferences, and challenge themselves to try out new strategies that are at odds with their styles of learning.

2.10. Top-down and Bottom-up language processing

Depending on the type and amount of knowledge and experiences learners have, different processing strategies will be put into practice in order for interpretation and production of the target language messages. Nonnative language speakers often lack the proficiency that would allow them to process easily the spoken and written texts.

In order to compensate for their lack of knowledge, they rely heavily on the context and their prior knowledge to process new information. This type of processing is called top-down or knowledge driven interpretation. In the field of learning strategies, using previous knowledge to interpret messages is a strategy in itself.

In contrast, language processing that relies more on linguistic items such as spelling patterns, grammatical features, lexical items is referred to as bottom-up or data-driven

interpretation. Effective language learners have the ability to use both top-down and bottom-up processing in their interpretation of messages.

2.11. Communicative competence

The main goal of learning a foreign language is to develop communicative competence. According to Widdowson, knowing a language is thought of as "having a knowledge of correct usage, but this knowledge is of little utility in its own: has to be complemented by a knowledge of appropriate use" (7).

Celce- Murcia and Elite Olshtain (2010) have reported that Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) showed that communicative competence includes four main competencies:

1) Linguistic or grammar competence, which consists of the basic elements of communication: sentence patterns, morphological inflections, lexical resources, and phonological or orthographic systems.

2) Sociolinguistic competence, which consists of the social and cultural knowledge required to use language appropriately, with reference to formality, politeness, and other contextually defined choices.

3) Discourse competence, which involves the selection of sequencing and arrangement of words, structures, and sentences/utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written whole with reference to a particular message and context.

4) Strategic competence, which includes the strategies and procedures relevant to language learning, language processing, and language production. This repertoire of strategies activates knowledge of the other competencies and helps language learners compensate for gaps or deficiencies in knowledge when they communicate (16).

This study suggests the implementation of language strategies based instruction and explores the possibility of developing strategic competence in students, to make them strategic thinkers who can self-regulate their learning to become autonomous learners.

2.12. Speaking strategies

Speaking can be considered the most difficult skill to acquire since it requires command of both listening comprehension and speech production skills such as vocabulary, retrieval, pronunciation, choosing grammatical pattern, etc…) in unpredictable, unplanned circumstances. At the same time speaking can be seen to be the easiest skill for we can use body language, explanations, demonstrations, and other strategies in order to make ourselves understood by others.

Often having linguistic competence in the target language is insufficient to get one's message across. That is to say, students need to develop a set of strategies to fill the gaps or any problems they may face when interacting with others. For example, learners decide to give up altogether the message or change an expression that they wished to use in their speech; in other situations, they express only a part of their idea, or even change completely what they want to say by exchanging it with another thought different from the one they originally wanted to convey because they are unable to find the appropriate expression or word. These strategies are called "compensatory strategies" by Oxford (1990).

It is important to raise awareness of students about these strategies and others through the use of communicative activities. These strategies should be included in a general strategy based type of instruction in order to be efficient. Oxford (1990) suggests that strategies such as adjusting or approximating the message, word coinage, or circumlocution, paraphrasing, getting help need to be found within foreign languages learning classrooms.

This is one of the objectives of this research which aims at discovering strategies that the students are using and build upon them in accordance with their learning styles and preferences. Detailed information about speaking strategy training is provided in (appendix for speaking strategies).

Crookall and Oxford (1990) suggest a wide variety of simulations and games for communicative activities such as using packs of ninety-six cards with photographs of faces representing young, old, plain, attractive, sad, happy, tired, and animated people of all ages, occupations, ethnicities, etc… the learners can describe these people (faces) by making use of compensation strategies (qtd. in Murcia 176).

The above mentioned activities are needed in an active classroom along with story telling, self-reports, descriptions, and the like.

2.13. Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation and self-analysis can be another helpful means that can be used by the learners to control their speech production. For example, students can be recorded or can record themselves. While observing themselves and their peers on a playback of their participation in spoken interaction, the learners can present an analysis and comments on their own performance, criticism that will help them to enhance their verbal communication. More over the use of videotaping can make the learner see and recall every moment of their interaction, their mistakes, and the strategies they have used. This will contribute to raising their awareness about their learning, strategies, and thinking. In other words, students will develop awareness about the way they learn a foreign language or meta-cognition which is necessary to self-regulate their learning to rich independence.

2.14. Reading strategies

Brantmeier (2002) asserts that Cognitive strategies are direct strategies related to the mental processing of a target language. They are the 'specifi c "attacks" that learners put into practice when they encounter a learning or comprehension problem. As to meta-cognitive strategies, they are indirect strategies used to monitor the self while engaged in an activity such as reading. According to Swaffar, meta-cognitive awareness of reading is, in essence, an

exchange between the reader and the text (qtd. in Gascoigne 72). Therefore, it is important to attract the attention of students to the crucial role that these functional strategies play in the learning in general and foreign language learning in particular. Helping students use these strategies consciously is the key for self-directed learning.

2.15. Motivational strategies

The effect of motivational strategies is based on some preconditions. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, for instance, it is important that lower needs must be satisfied before higher needs can engage in operation. Research on the relationship between workers' satisfaction and productivity indicate that their motivation is influenced by their job as well as by the job environment, their social relationships with their peers, and especially, their feelings about their boss. In other word, workers will work harder and do their best if they like their boss. However, if they that their boss is oppressive, they display apathy and defense.

Thus, it is of importance that teachers act as lead managers rather than boss managers because lead managers are more likely than boss managers to find ways to students' cooperation and strengthen them to take more responsibility over their learning inside and outside the classroom.

2.16. Some related studies on communication strategies

Positive effects of strategy instruction have been found by renamed scholars:

Cohen (1998) has found that SBI is worthwhile and suggests that an integration of strategy training with the regular language instruction taking place in the classroom can improve speaking skills of the target language learners. Knowing which strategy to use before and while speaking may decrease learner's anxiety, strengthen their self-confidence, and enhance their capacity to perform a self-evaluation with regard to their communicative ability.

In her work on learning styles and strategies, Oxford (2003: p. 11) reports that in ESL/EFL research, positive effects of strategy instruction have been noticed in improved oral communication of the learners (Dadour & Robbins, 1996; O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Küpper, & Russo, 1985) and reading (Park-Oh, 1994).

In another study, Nunan (1997) has found that SBI has produced a positive effect by increasing students' motivation. Still in another one, Chamot et al. (1996) indicates that greater self-efficacy has been shown among native-English-speaking learners of foreign languages (Oxford, "GALA" 11).

Given the positive results produced by strategy based instruction (SBI) not only in improving the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), but increasing students self-efficacy and motivation, needless to say that teaching students how to learn in order to rich independence should be the very aim of effective education.

2.17. Context and strategies use

The effectiveness of learning strategies depends on the engagement of the learners. That is, engaged learners are more active in the learning process as stated by Williams and Burden (1997) who look at language learners as actively participating at the learning process, using various mental strategies in order to deal with the language to be learned (qtd. in Oxford

Language learning students are not passive recipient who accumulate knowledge, rather they are thinking individuals who exercise an influence on their learning in order to attain the needed proficiency. Hence, the language learning strategies are not just thoughts and desires of the learners, but concrete and organized actions that are performed on the part of the learners and which are considered more appropriate for their learning.

In Weinstein et al.'(2000) view, the strategic learner is being involved in the following activities:

Planning to reach a goal;

Selecting methods or strategies to achieve the goal;

Implementing the methods identified in the plan;

Monitoring progress;

Modifying the plan, methods or even the original goals;

Evaluating the outcome, for the benefit of further learning

It is important then to raise students' awareness of the benefits of taking control over their learning and assist them to become independent learners.

2.18. Value of learning strategies

Oxford (1990a) suggests that language learner strategies (LLS)"…are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence"

Language learning strategies are important because researchers contend that training students in the use of LLS can help them become better language learners. Initial research on "good language learner' by (Rubin, stern, 1975), Naiman described a number of good strategies that successful language learner employ:

Grenfell and Macaro (2007) state that language learning strategy research has become very popular because it affects learning not only in the classroom but outside as well by providing useful information to both teachers and language learners that can enhance the language learning process (qtd. in White 9).

Weinstein assume that being conscious of one's own learning and thinking is a crucial point in acquiring and developing a learning strategies repertoire. She asserts that the strategic learner would be using different types of knowledge in order to undertake higher-level thinking activities:

− Knowledge about themselves as learners;

− Knowledge about different types of academic tasks;

- Knowledge about strategies and tactics for acquiring, integrating and applying new learning;

- Knowledge about prior content;

- Knowledge about which recent and future contexts would be appropriate for the application of new knowledge.

Learning strategies are signs of autonomy. However, the strategies are influenced by many factors such as goals, attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and so on. For example, if the learners use strategies just as a means to pass their exams or prepare their assignments, neglecting the benefits of information retention and learning of the material, the learners can be thought of as not taking responsibility for their own learning and the learning strategies are not learning strategies in proper sense of the word (Oxford, 1994).

Schmeck (1988) makes a distinction among three types of learning strategies. Strategies called deep strategies, which are linked with long-term learning. Surface Strategies, roles of which are superficial, that is, do not lead to long-term learning, and achievement strategies, which aim at attaining good marks or grades and which do not guarantee long-term-learning.

Wang and Peverly defined effective learning as follows:

Effective learners are characterized in the research literature as being cognitively and affectively active in the learning process. They are seen as being capable of learning independently and deliberately through identification, formulation and restructuring of goals, use of strategy planning; development and execution of plans; and engagement of self-monitoring.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990, 1996, 2008) have found that more proficient learner have at their disposal a larger number of strategies and use them more frequently in comparison with less proficient learners .Also, more proficient learners handle their use of strategies more effectively through combinations of various strategies into strategy sets of clusters to deal with challenging tasks. In addition, proficient learners are able to control mentally the appropriateness of the chosen options of strategies at any given moment. More over

they are flexible in their strategies, that is, if the selected combination of strategies did not produce the results expected, they adjust the chosen set and try again. In contrast, less proficient English language learners lack the know-how to identify the more effective strategies relevant to the task at hand. (qtd. in Oxford, 51).

2.19. Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to the awareness one has about one's own capabilities for learning or performing tasks at given levels. The role of self-efficacy in learning is crucial. The value of any teaching methodology is determined in relation to its effects on students' self-efficacy and on their learning outcomes. For instance, assisting learners extensively can improve their learning, but will have no influence on students' self-efficacy to enable them to effectively learn on their own. It is necessary then, as recommended by Bandura (1986, 1999) that students should be given opportunities to practice the new material or skills on their own to attain self-directed mastery (Schunk 126).

2.20. Self- regulated learning

Self-regulation or self-direction is the ability to control one's own learning. In other words, self-regulated learners are aware about their knowledge and skills, and they are able to find ways to success regardless to the problems they may face in their studies."Unlike their passive classmates, self-regulated students proactively seek out information when needed and take the necessary steps to master it." (Zimmerman 4).

According to Schunk, the best way to teach self-regulation involves "social models, corrective feedback, strategy instruction and practice, goal setting, and self-evaluation of learning progress". Academic self-regulation can be improved if student were provided with opportunities for self-directed practice by adapting the new skills to different situations." Teachers can assist students in setting goals and self-control skills, like self-monitoring, and

evaluation by showing their learners how to employ them in the real world through practice and activities (127).

2.21. Learning theories and approaches

2.21.1. Constructivist approaches

Vygotsky and Rogers (1978) have some views in common in stressing of the social interactive nature of learning. His formal principle focused on the development of an individual's self-concept and of his or her personal sense of reality, those internal forces that cause a person to act. Given a non-threatening environment, a person will form a picture of reality that will enable his grow and learn.

Rogers considers that if the context for learning is properly created, then human being will learn everything they need to learn.

In her book (2009), Wells reports that:

While conducting the research on children's development, Vygotsky was also the director of the Moscow Institute for what is now called special education. He did not agree with the way in which slow learning or mentally retarded children were oriented to different kinds of special education based on their tests scores . This seemed to him to be both inappropriate and unfair. Therefore, he decided to investigate the problem by working with children while they were taking one of the tests. Having waited until a child had reached the highest level of test item that she or he could answer correctly, he tried providing cues or hints as the child attempted later items, and what he found was that they could often succeed in answering several more test items correctly. (284)

These findings led to his idea of a zone of proximal development (ZPD) which is described as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" Simply stated, 'what a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow.' (qtd. in Wells 284).

Vygotsky's definition indicate that the ZPD is the difference between what a person can achieve when acting alone and what the same person can accomplish when acting with support from someone else and/r cultural artifacts.

It is important to notice that the ZPD is not a place or something physical, rather is just a term used to help us understand and imagine how "mediational means are appropriated and internalized" (Lantolf, 17).

Lantolf suggests that ZPD can be considered as a collaborative construction of opportunities for people to develop their cognitive abilities or what is called by Swain and Lapkin "occasions for learning" (qtd. in Lantolf, p.17). that is to say, ZPD is not only linked to an expert how teaches some skills to a novice, but expertise can results from people working collaboratively, for example, students who learn a foreign language can enhance their level of performance by working together, operating thus on their ZPD.

It is worth mentioning that when experts assist novices, novices do not internalize and reproduce the new model or what has been performed by the expert, but they make some changes to it through imitation. Imitation in the ZPD is not copying, but is a complex process in which the persons being assisted do not produce the same behaviour offered to them through mere repetitions. This kind of assistance considers learners as participants who shares communication with the experts, making thus the exchange both communicative and instructional.

In traditional schools, the expert or language teacher may insist that a student repeats an exact feature of what he/she receives. In this case, imitation, as defined by Vygotsky, is not engaged even though the novices will successfully repeat the expert's model. Therefore, true assistance is the way in which exchange between the learner and the teacher is communicative and instructional (Lantolf, p. 18). In the same way, strategies based instruction aims at helping learners of foreign languages to become effective learners by showing them how to learn.

Vygotsky described learning development as self-regulated process in which a novice learner is assisted by an expert, or a more proficient person helps another one in acquiring knowledge that he/she is not able to learn on their own. Wood (1998) indicates that the assistance provided to the earners may help them to become more attentive, concentrate on a task, or recall information. According to Wertsch and Addison-Stone (1985), learners are supported and guided in performing a given task (through explanation, demonstration, and practice) until they understand clearly or become conscious of their ability to execute the tasks on their own because the awareness of their ability to perform any activity as well as possible is the final outcome of self-regulation (qtd. in Hewitt, 16). This is compatible with this study which aims at helping student to self-regulate their learning to become independent learners.

In his book 'Understanding effective learning', Hewitt reports that Wood (1998), indicates that in order to be successful in school, learners should develop self-regulation (internal self-support) in many important domains such paying attention, concentrating, organizing, memorizing, acquiring communicative skills (speaking and writing), evaluating, being able to self-correct and self-instruct, all of which were supported previously by a more proficient assistant (16).

In the same way, Vermunt (1998) asserts that learning is an "active, constructive, and self-directed process" in which learners construct their own knowledge that is represented and interpreted according to their learning experiences. He argues that learners have mental learning models and learning orientation such as their views, attitudes, expectations, and anxieties. That is to say, they possess their own ideas and perception, and even misconceptions about learning and the learning process that influence the selection and work of regulation strategies. These strategies or self-regulation strategies have a direct impact on the processing strategies (cognitive strategies). In his study on university students, Vermunt discovered that many students did not build what he calls "constructive, self-regulated, high quality-learning". According to Vermunt, many students can be considered as not constructive and not self regulated i.e., rather

reproduction directed. He concludes that **didactic measures** that are usually used by teachers to direct study skills have not a significant influence on the processing strategies of the learners. Vermunt suggests teaching students self-regulated strategies together with didactic measures in order to produce the necessary influence on the mental learning models of the learners to change their views from "reproduction directed" to knowledge construction with the very aim to guide them to self-regulation (qtd. in Hewitt 16).

2.21.2. Social cognitive learning theory

Cognitive learning theories emphasize unobservable mental processes that people use to learn and remember new information or skills. cognitive theorists are exclusively concerned with human learning, as opposed to behaviourists who try to discover principles of behaviour that can be applied to all living organisms.

Social cognitive theory assumes that people learn form their social environments. Bandura views human functioning as a set of mutual exchanges between personal factors, behaviours, and environment. In this respect, learning is considered as an information processing activity where knowledge is mentally represented in symbols that will be used to guide one's future actions. According this theory, learning occurs in two main ways i.e., enactively and vicariously by observing models, by listening to instructions, and by engaging with print or electronic materials. By observing models, people acquire knowledge, urles, skills, strategies, beliefs, and attitudes. In addition, observers will retain behaviours that lead to success and neglect those that lead to failure.

Bandura noted that learning through modeling-directly or vicariously involves four phases: paying attention, retaining the modeled behaviour, reproducing the behaviour, and being motivated to repeat the behariour.

Learners acquire complex skills by combining enactive (direct) and vicarious learning. In first stage, they acquire an approximation of the skills by looking at models. Assisted practice

and corrective feedback on the part of the teacher, learners will improve their performance of the skill. With more practice, they refine and acquire self-regulatory skills and strategies. Bandura and his colleagues have demonstrated the benefits of modeling and how it increases learning, rate, in addition to promoting the quantity of knowledge acquired (Schunk, 128).

2.21.3. Importance of modeling

In correcting misconceptions about the nature and scope of modeling, Bandura argues that modeling is powerful means or mode of learning and does not produce mimicry as a response. Researchers such as Bandura(1986), Rosenthal and Zimmerman (1978) have found that modeling included both abstract information transmitted through a given exemplars about the structure, and the guiding principles that govern the behaviour, Once individuals learn the guiding principle, they can use it to create new version of the behaviour that is appropriate to new situations. According to Latham and Saari, (1979), Porras, et al. (1979), generic managerial skills, developed through modeling and guided enactments with instructive feedback, improve managerial functioning that, in turn, reduces employee absentee and turnover rates, and raises the level of organizational productivity (qtd. in Bandura, 2005, 13).

Hence, teachers can act as models and express loudly their thoughts and show to the students the way they (teachers) use their own strategies to deal with a given task, be it in speaking, reading, writing, or listening. By doing so, the learners will focus on their own thinking processes and compare them to those performed by the teacher in front of them. Being aware of their thinking processes and with guidance of their teacher, regarding when, where to use these techniques, the students will experience success in L2.

Also, modeling can give birth to innovation. That is to say, when exposed to models who differ in their styles of thinking and behaviour, obsesrvers seldom produce their behaviour exclusively after a unique source. Even more, the best features of the models are not copied exactly as the original ones. Rather, observers combine various features of different models into

new blend that is different from the models performed in front of them. To put it another way, two observers can build new shapes of behaviour completely different from one another by putting together varied features from the presented models.

Moreover, modeling can promote creativity. As indicated by Harris and Evans (1973), Gist (1989), unconventional ways of thinking increases innovativeness in other people. Bandura (1986) states "creativity involves synthesizing existing knowledge into new ways of thinking and doing things" (p. 13). People take advantages from element of models that are perceived as effective, improve upon them, construct new forms, and use them according to their changing situations. This selective modeling can be the "mother of innovation", to repeat Bandura's expression.

Responding to the critics who argued that modeling cannot build cognitive skills necessary for problem-solving activities, Bandura (2005)'s response was as follows:

Meichenbaum (1984) has found that cognitive skills can be developed through verbal modeling in which models verbalize about their reasoning strategies as they engage in problem-solving activities. The thoughts guiding their decisions and actions are thus made observable. During verbal modeling, the models verbalize their thought processes as they evaluate the problem, seek information relevant to it, generate alternative solutions, weigh the likely outcomes associated with each alternative, and select the best way of implementing the chosen solution. They also verbalize their strategies for handling difficulties, how to recover from errors and how to motivate themselves. Scholars such as Gist (1989) ; Gist, Bavetta, and Stevens (1990); Gist, Schwoerer, and Rosen (1989); Debowski, Wood, and Bandura (2001) indicate that cognitive modeling proved to be more powerful in enhancing perceived self-efficacy and building innovative and other complex cognitive skills than the commonly used tutorial methods(14).

It is important to notice that in addition to intense explanations about the strategies it is equally important that language teachers verbalize their thought processes while using a set of

strategies in order to complete the task at hand. In doing so, the teacher aims at making his/her students think about their own mental processes and initiate them to self-control. In other word, additional effort and more patience are needed from the teachers in scaffolding their learners to make them experience the enjoyment facilitated learning caused by strategy instruction.

It has been indicated earlier that in language learning strategies training, the learner construct their knowledge of the new strategy by moving from declarative knowledge to procedural one. We think this require a lot of practice and activities, engagement, and perseverance on the part of the students in and outside the classroom to attain this level of manipulating strategies. However, there are affective factors such motivation and self-efficacy of the learners that should be maintained high.

Therefore, teachers should raise in their students high self-efficacy beliefs through positive feedback about their capabilities and encourage them to set high aspirations of goals. In other words, instructors should avoid any behaviour that may lower learners' beliefs about their capacities because if students were led to believe they lacked such capabilities, they will not display high intellectual performances, according to Bouffard-bouchard (1990), cited in Zimmerman (1990), as opposed to those whose sense of efficacy is raised, even though they were of equal mental ability.

2.22. Data collection Techniques for Language Learning Strategies

Because of the huge number and variety of learning strategies, many researchers have used different tools and techniques in order to identify each type of strategy. These tools are as follows: observation, retrospective interviews, stimulated recall interviews, questionnaires, written diaries and journals, think- aloud protocols, computer tracking, and multiple approaches to data collection each of which has its own limitations, but provides significant information about unobservable mental learning strategies.

According to Chamot (2004), the most efficient method for determining students' learning strategies is using questionnaires. These means and techniques used by the researchers are valuable tools for teachers to uncover their students' learning strategies before implementing strategies-based instruction (15).

<center>**CHAPTER THREE**</center>

<center>**METHODOLOGY**</center>

This chapter presents the whole scheme of the research, the restatement of research questions along with some characteristics (demographics) of the respondents. Then instruments and procedures used for collecting data are described as well as data analysis is presented.

3.1. Design of the study

The present study is descriptive and based on field survey in order to provide information about a given group of students. This investigation attempts to find out the influence of strategy training on verbal communication of the students, perceptual learning style preferences, and language learning strategies of third-year LMD students who study English for academic purposes at the University Mohamed Kheider, Biskra.

In this survey, both qualitative and quantitative data gathering were employed. As far as qualitative data is concerned, observations were used. As to quantitative data, they are realized through the use of two questionnaires i.e., one aimed at determining learning styles the students prefer to use and the other one aimed at eliciting language learning strategies that learner like using.

3.2. Research questions

This study attempts to address the following questions:

1. What is the impact of language learning strategies training on student verbal communication?

2. What are the learning styles of the students?

3. What types of language learning strategies being used by the learners?

3.3. Participants

This study involved twenty three (23) students who belong to same group of English language learners. The group consists of six (06) males and seventeen (17) females. The students were chosen using purposive non-random sampling as the knowledge and have been taught some communicative strategies namely narrating, circumlocution, and asking questions. The researcher seized this opportunity to check whether these strategies are expressed by the students in oral production. The participants are between 20 to of age and studying English for academic purposes at the University Mohamed Kheider, Biskra.

3.4. Instruments

The data of this study were collected from observation and two standard questionnaires i.e., Reid's Perceptual learning Style Preferences (PLSPQ) and Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL).

3.4.1. Observation

During this research, classroom observations were employed aiming specifically at detecting communication strategies or students behaviour when narrating (telling a story about seven little goats and the wolf). It is worth mentioning that students have been taught such strategies according to their course program. In such observation, the researcher noted-down actions or strategies used by the learners when they were asked to narrate the story "The seven little goats and the wolf"

3.4.2. Using Reid's Perceptual Language Learning Style Preferences (PLLSPQ)

The first instrument employed to gather quantitative data was Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preferences Questionnaire (PLSPQ). This instrument was created especially for the purpose of investigating the learning styles of non-native speakers and consisting of 30

questions. It includes six types of learning styles with five statements each. The learning styles are: visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, individual learning (learning alone), and group learning (learning with others). The score of the respondents were calculated on the basis of five points scale, ranging from strongly agree (5 points), to strongly disagree (1 point).

It is worth noticing that the questionnaire was administrated without being translated into Arabic (Algerian Arabic) for the chosen population (3rd-Year) LMD students were assumed to understand the statements contained in the questionnaire. However, the participants were allowed to ask questions (if any) for clarification about the statements. The participants were given approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

3.4.3. Using Oxford's SILL questionnaire in the survey

A great deal of assessment tools exist for identifying the strategy used by L2/FL learners. For example, self-report surveys, observation, interviews, learner journal, think aloud protocols, to name a few, have been used by researchers each of which has advantages and disadvantages as reported by Oxford (1990) and Cohen and Scott (1996). The most widely used and popular means is the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (an appendix in Oxford, 1990) has been translated in more than 20 languages and used in several studies all over the world.

For the purpose of this study, a second instrument i.e., the Oxford's SILL was used to collect information from the students on strategies used in learning English. This kind of questionnaire was selected for its validity and reliability in gathering data on students' language learning strategies in order to respond to the research question formulated previously. Thus, twenty three sets of SILL questionnaire were given to the participants of this study to identify the strategies they use in learning English, and determine their most preferred strategies.

Oxford's SILL consists of six parts based on Oxford's (1990) classification of language learning strategies and includes fifty (50) close-ended questions with the five point scale from 1-5.The questionnaire was used as it is without any other translated version because the students

are supposed to understand the questions figuring on the questionnaire. The questionnaire is referred in appendix B.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Data collection

All the procedures used for collecting data were completed during class time with agreement with the teacher. The first day, the students were observed with the objective to determine the way they handle the general strategy of narration and compensation strategies. These students have been taught communication strategies such as narration, circumlocution, and others by their own teacher. The students have not been told that they will be observed to make them more spontaneous when making effort to retell a story.

4.1.1. Data collection through observation and Perceptual

Learning Style Preference (PLSPQ)

After the observations, the students were asked to complete the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ). In order to do so, more than half an hour was allocated to them to answer the statements because the students were very slow in fill in the questionnaires. In addition, the respondents were recalled to be honest, spontaneous and quick in their responses. Once the questionnaires were completed, they were taken for data analyses.

4.1.2. Data collection through the SILL

As for the second questionnaire, i.e., the SILL, it was administred three days later. The SILL questionnaires were distributed to the learners who were asked to complete the task in 30 minutes, but it took longer for the participants to complete the SILL. After that, the sets of the SILL were gathered in order to be analysed.

Twenty three questionnaires distributed to the respondents were considered valid even though some of them needed recalculation by the researcher instead of being rejected given the small number of the population (only 23 students).

The data gathered from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, and percentage in order to determine the types of language learning strategies and the frequency of their use by the respondents.

4.2. Data Analyses

4.2.1. Analysis of the Observation

As it was mentioned earlier, the observation focuses on students' behaviour when they were required to narrate the story about "The wolf and seven little goats". During the observation, it was noticed that the majority of the students were silent. For those who made an effort to recall the events of the story, they displayed compensation strategies mainly through the use of gestures, facial expression, and by trying to say something between their lips. It seemed that the students are hesitant and uncomfortable to speak. This reliance on gestures to compensate for meaning instead of using explanations round the word or expression they could not find or what is called circumlocution strategies, can be interpreted that the students' vocabulary repertoire needed to be enriched.

In addition, the difficulty encountered by the students in narrating may be due to their styles of learning, because the major perceptual learning styles, identified after the observation, of the group are kinesthetic and group learning. Differently stated, these categories of learners learn better through acting and in collaboration with others, therefore, they would have performed better or retained the information if they took part in activities, for instance, taking roles in acting this story, telling the story to each other, writing parts of the story and link them to construct the whole.

4.2.2. Data analysis of the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaires

Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire utilized aimed at finding the major, minor, and negligible or negative learning style preferences of the learners.

In analyzing the respondents' responses to the questionnaires, it has been found that the major learning styles expressed in percentages (see table 4) are kinesthetic, followed by group learning, tactile, auditory, visual, and individual learning.

Table 4.2 displays multi-styles of the learners i.e., major style, minor, and negligible or negative. That is to say, each student can use all six styles; however, he/she has a tendency to prefer one or some of them. For example, the learner with code number (1), as shown in the table 4.2, has group learning as a major style, visual style as a minor style, and the other four styles (auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, individual) belong to her negligible or negative styles.

Table 4.1: Perceptual Learning Style Preference score

Students		Learning Style Preference(s)																
		Major Style (38-50)						Minor Style (25-37)						Negligible Style (0-24)					
Code	Gender	V	A	K	T	I	G	V	A	K	T	I	G	V	A	K	T	I	G
1	F	-	-	-	-	-	44	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	12	16	16	-
2	M	40	-	-	-	48	-	-	32	36	36	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	F	-	-	44	40	50	-	30	36	-	-	-	24	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	F	40	-	38	42	-	50	-	32	-		34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	F	40	-	38	46	-	38	-	-	-	-	32	-	-	20	-	-	-	-
6	F	-	40	38	40	-	-	30	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	-	22	-
7	F	-	42	40	44	-	42	-	-	-	-	26	-	24	-	-	-	-	-
8	F	38	46	46	42	-	40	-	-	-	-	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	F	38	44	46	40	-	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-
10	F	-	42	44	-	-	48	36	-	-	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	-
11	F	42	-	40	-	-	50	-	36	-	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-
12	M	-	38	46	48	-	44	30	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	M	40	44	40	44	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	-	-	-	24
14	F	-	38	42	-	-	46	36	-	-	34	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	F	-	-	42	40	-	40	-	28	-	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	M	38	44	46	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	36	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	F	-	38	42	-	-	46	34	-	-	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	-
18	M			42	42	-	-	32	34	-	-	-	36	-	-	-	-	10	-
19	F	-	42	46	46	-	44	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-
20	M	-	38	46	38	-	44	30		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	-
21	F	38	-	48	48	42	40	-	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	F	46	-	44	-	-	-	-	34	-	32	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	F	44	-	46	-	40	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-	24	-	-

Table 4.2: Multi-styles of the learners

Students		Learning Style Preference(s)																	
		Major Style						Minor Style						Negligible Style					
Code	Gender	V	A	K	T	I	G	V	A	K	T	I	G	V	A	K	T	I	G
1	F						X	X							X	X	X	X	
2	M	X				X			X	X	X		X						
3	F			X	X	X		X	X										X
4	F	X		X	X		X		X			X							
5	F	X		X	X		X					X			X				
6	F		X	X	X		X	X										X	
7	F		X	X	X		X					X		X					
8	F	X	X	X	X		X					X							
9	F	X	X	X	X		X											X	
10	F		X	X			X	X										X	
11	F	X		X			X		X									X	
12	M		X	X	X		X	X				X							
13	M	X	X	X	X	X													X
14	F		X	X			X	X				X							
15	F			X	X		X	X	X			X							
16	M	X	X	X	X							X	X						
17	F		X	X			X	X										X	
18	M			X	X			X	X				X					X	
19	F		X	X	X		X	X										X	
20	M		X	X	X		X	X										X	
21	F	X		X	X	X	X		X										
22	F	X		X					X		X	X	X						
23	F	X		X		X	X								X		X		

59

Preference means 13.50 and above = major learning style preference; means of

11.50–13.49 = minor learning style preference; means of 11.49 or less = negative learning style preference.

Perceptual Learning Style Preferences

V=Visual

A=Auditory

K=Kinesthetic

T=Tactile

I=Individual

G=Group

Table 4.3: Percentages of major perceptual learning style preference

Perceptual Learning style preference	N	(%)	Rank
Kinesthetic	23	91.30	1
Group learning	23	73.91	2
Tactile	23	65.22	3
Auditory	23	52.17	4
Visual	23	47.82	5
Individual learning	23	21.73	6

4.2.3. Data analysis of Strategy Inventory for Language learning (SILL)

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning was used with the very aim to elicit the language learner strategies that student are more likely to prefer. As it was described earlier, the SILL for L2/FL learners and which was used in this study consisted of 50 statements divided into six strategy categories each of which was represented by letters A, B, C, D, E, F indicating memory, cognitive, compensation, meta-cognitive, social, and affective strategies.

Table 4.4: Summary of students' language learning strategy use

Strategies	N	Mean	Rank
Memory strategies	23	3.34	5
Cognitive strategies	23	3.56	3
Compensation strategies	23	3.58	2
Meta-cognitive strategies	23	3.73	1
Affective strategies	23	3.26	6
Social strategies	23	3.36	4
Overall language learning strategies	23	3.92	

From the Table 4.4, we can notice that students overall language learning strategies use is superior to the medium level (M=3.46) and the respondents used all six categories and the averages were ranked in the high category. However, with regard to frequency of use, students use meta-cognitive strategies most often, followed by compensation, cognitive, social, memory, and the least frequently employed being affective strategies.

Table 4.5: Students' language learning strategies results

Respondents		Language Learning Strategies						
Code	Gender	A	B	C	D	E	F	Overall overage
S1	F	3.1	3.4	3.3	3.8	4.0	3.0	3.3
S2	F	3.0	2.6	2.5	3.1	2.0	2.5	2.7
S3	M	3.1	3.1	3.5	4.2	2.7	3.3	3.3
S4	M	3.1	3.2	3.8	3.7	2.7	2.3	3.2
S5	F	2.3	3.2	2.7	3.6	2.7	2.5	2.9
S6	F	2.8	4.1	3.7	4.3	4.0	4.3	3.9
S7	F	2.9	3.3	4.7	3.3	4.5	3.0	3.5
S8	F	4.0	3.7	2.8	3.5	3.6	3.0	3.5
S9	M	3.3	3.5	3.5	2.4	2.8	3.8	3.0
S10	M	2.9	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.3	2.8	2.7
S11	F	3.2	4.1	4.5	4.3	2.5	4.0	3.8
S12	F	3.4	3.9	2.8	4.2	3.3	4.2	3.7
S13	F	3.3	3.6	2.8	3.3	2.7	4.2	3.4
S14	M	3.4	3.9	4.0	3.7	3.1	4.1	3.8
S15	F	2.8	3.2	3.3	3.6	3.3	2.7	3.2
S16	F	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.4	3.2	2.3	3.0
S17	F	3.8	3.6	3.0	4.6	3.5	4.3	3.8
S18	F	3.9	3.8	4.5	4.7	3.5	2.3	3.8
S19	F	3.0	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.2	3.7
S20	F	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.8	4.5	4.0	4.5
S21	F	4.2	4.2	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.8
S22	F	3.7	3.4	2.8	3.7	2.7	3.7	3.4
S23	F	4.2	4.0	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.3

A= Memory strategies

B= Cognitive strategies

C= Compensation strategies

D= Meta-cognitive strategies

E= Affective strategies

F= Social strategies

From Table 3, the mean for each type of strategies are as follows:

XD= 3.73; XC= 3.58; XB= 3.56; XF= 3.36; XA= 3.34; XE= 3.26

Cognitive strategies which represented by (A) enable the learners to process he language items through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information in order to develop solid knowledge (schemata), and practicing the language. Many studies have shown that cognitive strategies are related to L2 proficiency according to Oxford (2003). Given the importance of these strategies, students' attention should be attracted to the usefulness of these in learning a foreign language.

Memory strategies, used by the respondents, help student to store and retrieve information, but do not imply deep comprehension. Memory strategies are mainly useful for vocabulary and structures retention in early stages of language learning. These strategies are normally less needed when learners possess a large vocabulary and concepts repertoire. This might be interpreted that the respondents have built rich vocabulary knowledge and structures since they do not rely too much on such strategies.

Meta-cognitive strategies are used for managing the whole learning process. These strategies help students to plan for a task, arrange a timetable to study something, evaluate one own progress to rich fixed goals, etc. Oxford (2003) asserts that meta-cognitive strategies are often signals that predict L2 proficiency (13).

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the whole work is summarized and the findings of the study are reviewed and comments are provided along suggestions for future research.

5.1. Summary of the study

The present investigation was a descriptive and interpretive in nature a field survey which aimed at establishing the impact of strategy training on verbal communication of the students, identifying the perceptual learning styles and strategy preferences of third-year LMD students learning English as foreign language for academic purposes at the University Mohamed Kheider, Biskra.

In order to gather data, instruments were used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were collected through observation, whereas quantitative data were collected with means of the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning.

The Perceptual Learning Style Questionnaire aimed at determining the styles of learning the students preferred using and the Strategy Inventory for Language learning was used to uncover the favored strategies of the English language learners.

The observations aimed at identifying the strategies used by the students when narrating. After having completed the observations, the students were asked to respond to the Perceptual learning style questionnaire. Three days later, the participants were given the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning to complete.

5.2. Results

This study attempted to answer the following question:

1. What is the impact of language learning strategies training on student verbal communication?

2. What are the learning styles of the students?

3. What types of language learning strategies being used by the learners?

As an answer to the first question, the classroom observations revealed that the students who tried to retell the story were hesitant and uncomfortable to speak. This reliance on gestures to compensate for meaning instead of using explanations round the word or expression they could not find or what is called circumlocution strategies, can be interpreted in many ways. For example, it is possible that students' vocabulary repertoire needed to be enriched. Also, this lack of ease in retelling a story may be due to 'memory' problem or teaching methodology (lacking visuals, etc,), or time 'pressure'. Needless to say that we live in a face-saving society which means that people prefer not asking questions about things about which they have few information for fear of being criticized.

In order to answer the second research question, data relating to the learning style questionnaire were analysed. From this analysis, it has been found that major learning styles of the respondents, expressed in percentages (see table 4.3), are kinesthetic, followed by group learning, tactile, auditory, visual, and individual learning.

The answer to the third research question was provided through the use of descriptive statistics i.e., the mean score and all the six categories that the students were using were uncovered. That is, the students use meta-cognitive strategies most often, followed by compensation, cognitive, social, memory, and the least frequently employed being affective strategies.

5.3. Recommendations

These findings are suggestive rather than conclusive. First, the small number of the participants in this study resulted in elevated averages. Therefore, we suggest that future studies would use larger populations of learners for the results provided by descriptive statistics to be more efficient.

Another limitation concerns the respondents i.e., to which extent they are knowledgeable about themselves. In other words, it is not an easy task to describe one's own behavior. In addition, other factors, such as health problem, mood or stress can impact the validity of the answers provided by the participants to statements included in the questionnaires. Hence, it is preferable to approach the identification of learning styles through the use of multi-dimensional methods that combine many instruments for gathering data.

The results provided insights into learners' strategies preferences in learning English as a foreign language. The appreciation of the students' strategies use provide opportunity for teachers to help learners to draw on their existing techniques to enhance their repertoire of language learning strategies in order to become more successful language learners.

Moreover, by detecting their students' specific characteristics may have a positive impact on their communicative competence. In other words, teachers can introduce to the learners new strategies, and train them as to how, when, where and the utility to transfer the latter to new situations outside the classroom.

It is important to the teachers to know about both the learning styles and strategy preferences of their students because this awareness about the uniqueness of each student and the differences among the group, can help teachers to make use of an appropriate methodology of teaching, by matching their teaching styles to learning styles of the students.

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Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire

Name, Surname_____ Date:

Sex: F M

Directions: People learn in many different ways. For example, some people learn primarily with their eyes (visual learners) or with their ears (auditory learners); some people prefer to learn by experience and / or by "hands-on" tasks (kinaesthetic or tactile learners); some people learn better when they work alone, while others prefer to learn in groups.

This questionnaire has been designed to help you identify the way(s) you learn best-the way(s) you *prefer* to learn.

Read each statement on the following pages. Please respond to the statements AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STUDY OF ENGLISH. Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. For example, if you strongly agree, mark:

Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly
X				

Please respond to each statement quickly, without too much thought. Try not to change your responses after you choose them. Please use a pen to mark your choices

Questionnaire Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. When the teacher tells me the instructions, I understand better.					
2. I prefer to learn by doing something in class.					
3. I get more work done when I work with others.					
4. I learn more when I study with a group.					
5. In class, I learn best when I work with others.					
6. I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the chalkboard.					
7. When someone tells me how to do something in class, I learn it better.					
8. When I do things in class, I learn better.					
9. I remember things I have learned in class better than things I have read.					
10. When I read instructions, I remember them better.					
11. I learn more when I can make a model of something.					
12. I understand better when I read instruction.					
13. When I study alone, I remember things better.					
14. I learn more when I make something for a class project.					
15. I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments.					
16. I learn better when I make drawings as I study.					

17. I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture.					
18. When I work alone, I learn better.					
19. I understand things better in class when I participate in role-playing.					
20. I learn better in class when I listen to someone.					
21. I enjoy working on an assignment with two or three classmates.					
22. When I build something, I remember what I learned better.					
23. I prefer to study with others.					
24. I learn better by reading than listening to someone.					
25. I enjoy making something for a class project.					
26. I learn best in class when I participate in related activities.					
27. In class, I work better when I work alone.					
28. I prefer working on projects by myself.					
29. I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to a lecture.					
30. I prefer to work by myself.					

Self-Scoring Sheet for Perceptual Learning Style Preference Survey

Directions: There are 5 statements for each learning category in this questionnaire.

The questions are grouped below according to each learning style. Each question you answer has a numerical value.

Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly
5	4	3	2	1

Fill in the blanks below with the numerical value of each answer. For example, if you answered **strongly agree** for statement 6 (a visual question), write the number 5 (SA) on the blank next to question 6.

Visual

6- __5__

When you have completed all the numerical values for Visual, add the numbers together. Multiply the answer by 2, and put the total in the appropriate blank.

Follow this process for each of the learning style categories. When you are finished, look at the scale that follows. It will help you determine your:

major learning style preference(s): score: 38-50

minor learning style preference(s): score: 25-37

negligible learning styles score: 0-24

If you need help, please ask your teacher.

Scoring Sheet

Visual Tactile

6- _____   11- _____

10- _____   14-_____

12- _____   16-_____

24- _____   22-_____

29- _____   25-_____

Total_____ x 2 =_____ Total _____ x 2 =_____

(Score) (Score)

Auditory Group

1- _____   3- _____

7- _____   4- _____

9- _____   5- _____

17- _____   21- _____

20- _____   23- _____

Total _____ x 2 =_____ Total _____ x 2 =_____

(Score) (Score)

Kinaesthetic Individual

2- _____   13- _____

8- _____   18- _____

15- _____   27- _____

19- _____   28- _____

26- _____   30- _____

74

Total _____ x 2 = _____ Total _____x 2 = _____

 (Score) (Score)

Major learning style preference(s) score: 38-50

_____

Minor learning style preference(s) score: 25-37

_____

Negligible learning styles score: 0-24

_____

Explanation of Learning Style Preferences

Students learn in many different ways. The questionnaire you completed and scored showed which ways you prefer to learn English. In many cases, students' learning style preferences show how well students learn material in different situations.

The explanations of major learning style preferences below describe the characteristics of those learners. The descriptions will give you some information about ways in which you learn best.

Visual Major Learning Style Preference

You learn well from *seeing words* in books, on the chalkboard, and in workbooks. You remember and understand information and instructions better if you read them. You don't need as much oral explanation as an auditory learner, and you can often learn alone, with a book. You should take notes of lectures and oral directions if you want to remember the information.

Auditory Major Learning Style Preference

You learn from *hearing words* spoken and from oral explanations. You may remember information by reading aloud or moving your lips as you read, especially when you are learning new material. You benefit from hearing audio tapes, lectures, and class discussions. You benefit from making tapes to listen to, by teaching other students, and by conversing with your teacher.

Kinesthetic Major Learning Style Preference

You learn best by experience, by being involved physically in classroom experiences. You remember information well when you actively participate in activities, field trips, and role-playing in the classroom. A combination of stimuli--for example, an audiotape combined with an activity--will help you understand new material.

Tactile Major Learning Style Preference

You learn best when you have the opportunity to do "hands-on" experiences with materials. That is, working on experiments in a laboratory, handling and building models, and touching and working with materials provide you with the most successful learning situation. Writing notes or instructions can help you remember information, and physical involvement in class related activities may help you understand new information.

Group Major Learning Style Preference

You learn more easily when you study with at least one other student, and you will be more successful completing work well when you work with others. You value group interaction and class work with other students, and you remember information better when you work with two or three classmates. The stimulation you receive from group work helps you learn and understand new information.

Individual Major Learning Style Preference

You learn best when you work alone. You think better when you study alone, and you remember information you learn by yourself. You understand new material best when you learn it alone, and you make better progress in learning when you work by yourself.

Minor Learning Styles

In most cases, minor learning styles indicate areas where you can function well as a learner. Usually a very successful learner can learn in several different ways.

Negligible Learning Styles

Often, a negligible score indicates that you may have difficulty learning in that way. One solution may be to direct your learning to your stronger styles. Another solution might be to try to work on some of the skills to strengthen your learning style in the negligible area.

This explanation was adapted from the C.I.T.E. Learning Styles Instrument, Murdoch Teacher Center, Wichita, Kansas 67208.

STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

Version for Speakers of Other Languages Learning English

Directions

This form of the STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language. You will find statements about learning English. Please read each statement. On the separate Worksheet, write the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that tells HOW TRUE OF YOU THE STATEMENT IS.

    1. Never or almost never true of me

    2. Usually not true of me

    3. Somewhat true of me

    4. Usually true of me

    5. Always or almost always true of me

NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE OF ME means that the statement is <u>very rarely true of you.</u>

USUALLY NOT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you <u>less than half the time.</u>

SOMEWHAT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you <u>about half the time.</u>

USUALLY TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true <u>more than half the time.</u>

ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you <u>almost always.</u>

Answer in terms of <u>how well the statement describes you</u>. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. <u>There are no right or wrong answers to these statements</u>. Put your answers on the separate Worksheet. Please make no marks on the items. Work as quickly as you can without being careless. This usually takes 20-30 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, let the teacher know immediately.

Part A

1. I think of the relationship between what if already know and new things I learn in English.

2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.

3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the new word to help me remember the word.

4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.

5. I use rhymes to remember new English words.

6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.

7. I physically act out English words.

8. I review English lessons often.

9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their locations on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.

Part B

10. I say or write new English words several times.

11. I try to talk like native speakers.

12. I practice the sounds of English.

13. I use the English words I know in different ways.

14. I start conversations in English.

15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.

16. I read for pleasure in English.

17. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.

18. I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.

19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.

20. I try to find patterns in English.

21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.

22. I try not to translate word-for-word.

23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.

Part C

24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.

25. When I cannot think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.

26. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.

27. I read English without looking up every new word.

28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.

29. If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.

Part D

30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.

31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.

32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English.

33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.

34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.

35. I look for people I can talk to in English.

36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.

37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills.

38. I think about my progress in learning English.

Part E

39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.

40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.

41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.

42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.

43. I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.

44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.

Part F

45. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to sow down or to say it again.

46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.

47. I practice English with other students.

48. I ask for help from English speakers.

49. I ask questions in English.

50. I try to learn about the culture of the English speakers.

Worksheet for Answering and Scoring the SILL

Name, Surname: Date:

Sex: M F

 1. The blanks (_____) are numbered for each item on the SILL.

 2. Write your response to each item (i.e., write 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) in each of the blanks.

 3. Add up each column. Put the result on the line marked SUM.

 4. Divide by the number under SUM to get the average for each column. Round this average to the nearest tenth, as in 3.4.

 5. Figure out your overall average. To do this, add up all the SUMs for the different parts of the SILL. Then divide by 50.

Part A Part B Part C Part D Part E Part F Whole SILL

1. ____ 10. ____ 24. ____ 30. ____ 39. ____ 45. ____ SUM Part A____

2. ____ 11. ____ 25. ____ 31. ____ 40. ____ 46. ____ SUM Part B____

3. ____ 12. ____ 26. ____ 32. _____ 41. ____ 47. ____ SUM Part C____

4. ____ 13. ____ 27. ____ 33. _____ 42. ____ 48. ____ SUM Part D____

5. ____ 14. ____ 28. ____ 34. _____ 43. ____ 49. ____ SUM Part E____

6. ____ 15. ____ 29. ____ 35._____ 44._____ 50.____ SUM Part F____

7. ____ 16. ____ 36. _____

8. ____ 17. ____ 37. _____

9. ____ 18. ____ 38. _____

19. ____

20. ____

21. ____

22. ____

23. ____

SUM____ SUM____ SUM____ SUM____ SUM_____ SUM____ SUM____

$\div 9$=____ $\div 14$=____ $\div 6$=____ $\div 9$=____ $\div 6$=____ $\div 6$=____ $\div 50$=____

(Overall Average)

SPEAKING STRATEGIES

[Compiled by C. Alcaya, K. Lybeck, & P. Mougel, teachers in the Experimental sections of the Speaking Strategies Experiment, NLRC/CARLA, Univ. of Minnesota, November 1994]

1) Before You Speak

Lower your anxiety

• deep breathing

• positive self-talk

• visualize yourself succeeding

• relaxation techniques

• feel prepared

• other anxiety-lowering techniques?

Prepare and plan

• Identify the goal and purpose of the task: what is it you are to learn/ demonstrate in this exercise?

• Ask for clarification of the task if you are unsure of its goal, purpose, or how you are to do it.

• Activate background knowledge; what do you already know about this situation/task?

• Relate the task to a similar situation; make associations.

• Predict what is going to happen:

•Predict the vocabulary you will need. Make word maps, groupings.

•Think of how you might circumlocute for vocabulary you do not know. Think of synonyms, antonyms, explanations, or nonverbal communication that can substitute.

•Translate from English to French any words you predict you will need that you do not already know.

•Predict the structures (grammar) you will need.

•Review similar tasks in your textbook.

•Transfer sounds and structures from previously learned material to the new situation.

•Predict the difficulties you might encounter.

• Plan your responses and contributions:

•Organize your thoughts.

•Prepare a general "outline" (use notes, keywords, draw pictures).

•Predict what the other party is going to say.

•Rehearse (practice silently, act out in front of a mirror, record yourself and listen).

•Cooperate in all areas if it is a group task.

•Encourage yourself to speak out, even though you might make some mistakes.

2) While You Are Speaking

Feeling in control

• Take your emotional temperature. If you find you are tense, try to relax, funnel your energy to your brain rather than your body (laugh, breathe deeply).

• Concentrate on the task, do not let what is going on around you distract you.

• Use your prepared materials (when allowed).

• Ask for clarification ("Is this what I am supposed to do?"), help (ask someone for a word, let others know when you need help), or verification (ask someone to correct pronunciation).

• Delay speaking. It's OK to take time to think out your response.

• Don't give up. Don't let your mistakes stop you. If you talk yourself into a corner or become frustrated, back up, ask for time, and start over in another direction.

• Think in the target language.

• Encourage yourself (use positive self-talk).

Be involved in the conversation

• Direct your thoughts away from the situation (e.g., test!) and concentrate on the conversation.

• Listen to your conversation partner. Often you will be able to use the structure or vocabulary they use in your own response.

• Cooperate to negotiate meaning and to complete the task.

• Anticipate what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far.

• Empathize with your partner. Try to be supportive and helpful.

• Take reasonable risks. Don't guess wildly, but use your good judgment to go ahead and speak when it is appropriate, rather than keeping silent for fear of making a mistake.

Monitor your performance

• Monitor your speech by paying attention to your vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation while speaking.

• Self-correct. If you hear yourself making a mistake, back up and fix it.

• Activate your new vocabulary. Try not to rely only on familiar words.

• Imitate the way native speakers talk.

• Compensate by using strategies such as circumlocution, synonyms, guessing which word to use, getting help, using cognates, making up words, using gestures.

• Adjust or approximate your message. If you can't communicate the complexity of your idea, communicate it simply. Through a progression of questions and answers, you are likely to get your point across, rather than shutting down for a lack of ability to relate the first idea.

• Switch (when possible) to a topic for which you know the words. (Do not do this to avoid practicing new material, however!)

3) After You Speak

Evaluate your performance

• Reward yourself with positive self-talk for completing the task. Give yourself a personally meaningful reward for a particularly good performance.

• Evaluate how well the activity was accomplished (Did you complete the task, achieve the purpose, accomplish the goal? If not, what will you do differently next time?)

• Identify the problem areas.

• Share with peers and instructors (ask for and give feedback, share learning strategies).

• Be aware of others' thoughts and feelings.

Plan for future tasks

• Plan for how you will improve for the next time.

• Look up vocabulary and grammar forms you had difficulty remembering.

• Review the strategies checklist to see what you might have forgotten.

• Ask for help or correction.

• Work with proficient users of the target language.

• Keep a learning log (document strategies used and task outcomes, find out what works for you). (Cohen,1996).