

Language Learning Strategies of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies Students of Basilan State College

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Abstract— This descriptive quantitative study was conducted to determine the language learning strategies of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College. The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) Version 7.0, developed by Rebecca Oxford in 1989, was adopted and administered to 164 respondents. The findings of the study were: (1) the students used the Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social strategies to 'Moderate Extents'; and, (2) as a whole, the students used the language learning strategies to 'Moderate Extents'. Tested at 0.05-level of significance, there are significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to age. Thus, the respondents from different age groups have different extents of the language learning strategies used. Tested at the same level of significance, there are significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to gender. Hence, male and female respondents have different extents of language learning strategies used. The female students used the language learning strategies to a greater degree than the male students. Lastly, tested at the same level of significance, there are no significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to ethnicity. Therefore, the respondents belonging to different ethnic groups have the same extent of language learning strategies used.

Keywords— BAELS Students, Language Learning Strategies, Strategy Inventory.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language teachers and researchers have observed that some learners acquire English as a second or foreign language more instantaneously and effectively than others (Dreyer & Oxford, 1996; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Vance, 1999; Nisbet et al., 2005). For years, a great deal of effort has been carried out into developing theories, methods, and approaches for teaching language (Griffiths, 2018). However, issues with regard to the learners have been dealt with "relative neglect" (Dansereau, 1978, p. 78) and much less attention has been given to the language development process from the learning standpoint (Tarone and Yule, 1989). Albeit pivotal works have been continuously done on questions of how language is learned, when it is considered that the learner forms one half of the teaching and/or learning partnership, it might be considered surprising that, in general, teachers and researchers have "underestimated the significance of the learner's role" (Griffiths, 2013; Larsen Freeman, 2001, p. 12).

More than four decades ago, researchers such as Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) explored the possibility that success in language learning might be related to how students go about

the task (Griffiths, 2003). More recently, writers such as O'Malley (1987), Oxford (1990), Wenden (1991), Cohen (1998), and Chamot (2001) have suggested that learners might be able to learn a language more effectively with the use of language learning strategies.

Language learning strategies have been definite in various ways. Brown (2001, p. 113) asserted that techniques are specific methods of approaching a task "for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information" (Ali & Paramasivam, 2016); while Oxford (2011) avouched that language learning strategies are the conscious steps or behaviors put into practice by language learners to enhance and expedite the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information. The latter designates that learning strategies can serve multiple functions.

Although other scholars within the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) have conceptualized and classified language learning strategies in a variety of ways, Oxford (1990) developed the most comprehensive model to date. Oxford's (1990) classification includes six groups of strategies: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies (Nisbet et al., 2005).

Consequently, it is significant for Basilan State College to provide a threshold on the language learning strategies by which students of diverse languages employ to further develop their communicative competence and to possibly enhance its curriculum, instruction, and assessment to contribute in developing more Filipinos who are proficient in speaking and using a second language, specifically English. Moreover, the findings of this study will aid language learners to become more cognizant of the types of strategies that work well for multifarious learning activities and use them to improve their communicative competence. Hence, by recognizing what works best for the learners in a given context, teachers can aid less proficient learners by giving them more opportunities to learn the varied strategies employed by the more proficient learners (Ella, 2018).

With the minimal number of researches that focus on the usage of language learning strategies that provide meaningful insights into improving English language learning among Filipino learners, specifically in local avenues, there is a relevant need to conduct more studies in this field to further improve and enhance language learning and teaching. Thus, this proposed study on the Language Learning Strategies of

Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies Students of Basilan State College.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was zeroed in on determining the dominant Language Learning Strategies (LLS) used by the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the students in terms of age, gender, and ethnicity?
2. What are the extents of the language learning strategies used by the students?
3. Are there significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to age, gender, and ethnicity?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study was aimed to outline the dominant language learning strategies used by the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College. Thus, a descriptive quantitative research design was utilized. Moreover, the researcher used descriptive analysis to determine the students' responses on the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL).

B. Research Respondents

The subjects of this study were the 278 officially enrolled Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College, Academic Year 2019-2020.

The sample size of the respondents was determined using Slovin's formula. With a confidence level of 95 percent, giving a margin of error of 0.05, the sample size is One Hundred Sixty Four (164) students. Respondents were then identified through stratified random sampling. A random sampling of the students was conducted in each year level. Shown below is the distribution of the population and respondents of the study.

TABLE 1. The Distribution of the Population and Respondents

Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies	Population	Respondents
First Year	220	130
Second Year	58	34
TOTAL	278	164

C. Data Analysis

The validity and reliability of the instruments

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) is predicted as the most inclusive and widely used instrument for recognizing strategy preferences of language learners throughout the biosphere (Bremner, 1999; Foong & Goh, 1997, Green & Oxford, 1995). The SILL has been widely checked for reliability and validated in several ways. In 1995, it had been used in over 45 major studies involving approximately 8,500 learners around the globe (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995).

Reliability (Cronbach's α) for the SILL is reported as .93–.98 (which means that the internal consistency of the instrument is excellent), depending on whether students take the SILL in their own language or in a second language (Green & Oxford, 1995). Oxford (1990) and Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) reported high validity of the instrument based on multiple studies in which the SILL has been found to be significantly related to language performance as designated by grades, scores on other tests, self-ratings, and teacher ratings (Nisbet et al., 2005).

Data gathering procedure

Permissions from the President of Basilan State College, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Adviser of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies were sought by the researcher. Upon approval, the instruments were administered to the respondents according to the standard guidelines accompanying each instrument. The purpose of the study was explained both verbally and in writing to all the respondents. Additionally, benefits to participants, potential uses of the research data, and procedures for maintaining confidentiality were also comprehensively explained.

Statistical treatment of the data

To determine the significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to age and ethnicity, the One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used.

To determine the significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when data are grouped according to gender, the t –Test for Significant Difference was utilized.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted to determine the Language Learning Strategies (LLS) used by the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College.

A. Profile of the Student-Respondents

A little more than half of the student-respondents are twenty years old and older (52.8%); majority of them are females (61.6%); and, about 4 out of 10 of them (39.9%) are Yakans.

B. Extents of the Language Learning Strategies used by the Students

- a. The students used the Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social Strategies to 'Moderate Extents'.
- b. As a whole, the students used the Language Learning Strategies to a 'Moderate Extent'.
- c. The Language Learning Strategies that the students used to 'Great Extents', are as ranked:
 1. Pay attention when someone is speaking English.
 2. Notice English mistakes and use that information to help one do better.
 3. Try to find out how to be a better learner of English.
 4. If one cannot understand something in English, ask the other person to slow down or say it again.
 5. Have clear goals for improving English skills.
 6. Watch English language TV shows or go to movies

spoken in English.

7. Try to learn about the culture of English speakers.
8. Encourage to speak English even when afraid of making a mistake.
9. Try to find as many ways to use English.
10. Make summaries of information that are heard or read in English.
11. Write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.
12. Ask for help from English speakers.
13. Ask English speakers for corrections when talking.
14. First skim an English passage (read it quickly) then goes back and read carefully.
15. Practice English with other students.
16. Practice the sounds of English.
17. Think about progress made in learning English.
18. Try to relax whenever feeling afraid of using English.
19. Review English lessons often.
20. If one cannot think of an English word, use a word or phrase that means the same thing.

C. Significant Differences in the Extents of the Language Learning Strategies Used by Students

a. Significant Differences in the Extents of the Language Learning Strategies used by Students when grouped according to Age

1. Tested at 0.05-level of significance, there are no significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to age, in the Cognitive Strategy and Metacognitive Strategy domains.
2. Tested at the same level of significance, there are significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to age, in the Memory Strategy, Compensation Strategy, Affective Strategy, and Social Strategy domains.
3. Overall, tested at 0.05-level of significance, there are significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to age.

It could be interpreted that the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College from the different age groups have different extents of the language learning strategies used.

b. Significant Differences in the Extents of the Language Learning Strategies used by Students when grouped according to Gender

1. Tested at 0.05-level of significance, there are no significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to gender, in the Memory Strategy, Cognitive Strategy, Compensation Strategy, Affective Strategy, and Social Strategy domains.

The students, irrespective of their gender, have the same extent of the language learning strategies used, in terms of Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Affective, and Social Strategies.

2. Tested at the same level of significance, there are

significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to gender, in the Metacognitive Strategy domain.

The male and female students have different extents of the language learning strategies used, in terms of Metacognitive Strategies.

3. Overall, tested at 0.05-level of significance, there is a significant difference in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to gender.

It could be interpreted that the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies male and female students of Basilan State College have different extents of the language learning strategies used. The female students used the language learning strategies to a greater degree than the male students.

c. Significant Differences in the Extents of the Language Learning Strategies used by Students when grouped according to Ethnicity

1. Tested at 0.05-level of significance, there are no significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to ethnicity, in the Memory Strategy, Cognitive Strategy, Compensation Strategy, Metacognitive Strategy, and Affective Strategy domains.

The students, irrespective of their ethnicity, have the same extent of the language learning strategies used, in terms of Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, and Affective Strategies.

2. Tested at the same level of significance, there are significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to ethnicity, in the Social Strategy domain.

The students from the different ethnic groups have different extents of the language learning strategies used, in terms of Social Strategies.

3. Overall, tested at 0.05-level of significance, there are no significant differences in the extents of the language learning strategies used by students when grouped according to ethnicity.

It could be interpreted that the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College belonging to different ethnic groups have the same extent of the language learning strategies used.

4. In terms of Social Strategies, the Yakan students used the language learning strategies to a greater degree than students from the other ethnic groups. On the other hand, the Tagalog students used the language learning strategies to a lesser degree than students from the other ethnic groups.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

For the College Administrators and College Deans

With the findings that the Bachelor of Arts in English

Language Studies students of Basilan State College used language learning strategies in ‘moderate extent’ as a whole and a ‘great extent’ in paying attention when someone is speaking English; noticing one’s English mistakes and use those information to help one do better; and, trying to find out how to be a better learner of English, it is recommended that the College Administrators and College Deans shall train and expose instructors to array of teaching strategies and techniques that will proffer avenues for students to learn English language more meaningfully.

For the Instructors

Based on the findings that the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Basilan State College used Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective, and Social Strategies to ‘Moderate Extent’ and on the conclusion that there are significant differences in the language learning strategies used by the students when data are grouped according to age, it is recommended that language instructors integrate language learning strategies into their teaching approaches and methods, taking into consideration what strategies suit each or a group of learners, and encourage them to use the strategies as frequently as possible in carrying out tasks for a specific purpose or a specific skill area. Consequently, instructors can use the findings of this study to create a more conducive learning environment where they can provide and create materials as well as array of opportunities that best fit each learner’s language learning strategies.

For Future Researches

1. The data for this study was collected through Oxford’s (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). It is recommended that further studies shall be undertaken both quantitatively and qualitatively; incorporating varied measures such as interviews, journals, observations, and surveys to ideally delve into how learners employ strategies in performing and accomplishing language-related tasks, and draw perceptions of both the teachers and the learners on the relevance and effectiveness of different strategies.
2. Further study is needed to fully elucidate and explore the language learning strategies employed by students and the relationship between language learning strategies and proficiency among learners of English in multifarious educational contexts.

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