The Language Learning Strategies Used by Learners Studying Arabic and English as Foreign Languages

Fithriyah, Usman Kasim, Yunisrina Qismullah Yusuf *

ABSTRACT

Arabic and English are the foreign languages learnt most in Indonesia. Therefore, we investigated the students' inclinations in their learning strategies. Approximately 70 students from the Arabic and English majors at a university in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, filled in the modified Strategy Inventory for Language Learning questionnaire to obtain data. The results exposed the English students to employ more strategies than the Arabic students. From the six strategies, the Arabic students used meta-cognitive most, whilst the English students used meta-cognitive, compensation and social most. These strategies can be promoted in teaching so students can use them efficiently in language learning.

Keywords: Language Learning Strategies, Arabic Major, English Major, Foreign Language Learners.

Introduction

Research on second language learning acquisition suggests that the activeness of learners in applying effective language learning contributes to their successfulness in overcoming language difficulties. This is as pointed out by Macaro (2001, p. 264) who states "learners who are pro-active in their pursuit of language learning appear to learn best". It means that in order to be successful in learning new language, learners should be more active in finding ways to learn which suit their needs. In this case, one of the best ways to improve learners' language learning is by employing strategies.

With regard to the choice of language learning strategies used by learners, research notes that there are many factors which may influence and distinguish learners in determining and applying language learning strategies. According to Oxford (1989), the factors that are connected to the choice of strategy use are language being learned, degree of awareness, age, motivational level, learning style, personality types, major of study, and cultural background. Furthermore, proficiency levels, educational background, years of studying the language, are also variables taken into consideration.

Regarding to the reference above, there is considerable research on language learning strategies. However, the study on learning strategies use of Indonesian university students particularly on contrasting learners of different majors in foreign languages as a variable is still limited. Previous research mostly focused on English major students learning English rather than comparisons of foreign language major students (Davis & Abbas, 1991; Lengkanawati, 2004; Aunurrahman, Kurniawati, &Ramadhiyanti, 2013). To fill in the gap, there is a need to compare the language learning strategies used by learners who major a different foreign language in their studies. In our case, they are students who major in Arabic and English because these two languages are the most learnt foreign languages in our country, Indonesia. Therefore, it would be interesting to understand these trends since strategies do promote learning (Martinez, 1996) and the results can be inputs for teachers for direct implications in the language teaching process (Achmad & Yusuf, 2016).

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* State Islamic University Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh, Indonesia(1); and University of Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia(2, 3),.
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Based on our informal interviews with the students in a university in Banda Aceh, the teaching of Arabic and English languages is different. According to some students majoring in Arabic, their language learning focused more on learning of *qawaid* or grammar. This notion was also supported by the Arabic lecturers where most of them generally concentrate on the usage of the language. On the other hand, the teaching of English for English major students were said to be more varied and likely to focus on the language function as a tool for communication. The lecturers also informed us that they have never really introduced their students to language learning strategies to facilitate learning.

Accordingly, the present study attempts to find out the language learning strategies used by the Arabic and English major students in language learning because research in this topic is still scarce. The research questions of this study are: (1) What language learning strategies are used by Arabic major students? (2) What language learning strategies are used by English major students? and, (3) What are the differences in the use of language learning strategies between these two groups of language learners? It is expected that by understanding the language strategies used by these two language major students, it can assist the lecturers in improving language learning progress among their students. Language learning strategies can be stimulated in daily teaching by the lecturers so that students can be taught to use the strategies efficiently and how to deal with language difficulties.

Language Learning Strategies

The literature on language learning strategies starts with the work of Rubin in the 1970's which put the idea of several features of "good language learners", such as the ability to guess, willingness to conduct communication, seek to have opportunities to practice and learn language, have no reservation of making mistakes, concern on both words structures and meanings, and keep on observing both their and other ability to speech (Rubin, 1975). Later, the characteristic of good language learners was also proposed by Rubin and Thompson (1982). They presented 14 strategies to help students to become good language learners, such as organize information about the language, be creative and experiment with it, learn to live with uncertainty, use mnemonics, and use context to help them in comprehension. Moreover, Oxford (1989) points out that good language learners use strategies in six broad groups: metacognitive, affective, social, memory, cognitive, and compensatory. Conclusively, their studies suggest that good language learners appear to be actively involved in language learning and are able to overcome their problems related to their own learning.

Nonetheless, when conferring to the definitions of language learning strategies, the problem lies in the term strategy itself. Researchers have been arguing whether the use of strategies in language learning is conscious or unconscious processes. Several researchers argue that awareness is one of its important features, such as Weinstein and Mayer (1986) who strongly emphasize that intentional plays a significant role in language learning strategies. This argument is based on the assumption that learning strategies have a goal, thus to apply such strategies, it would be a deliberate decision. Thinking in a similar vein, Cohen (1990, p. 5) defines strategies as "learning processes which are consciously selected by the learners". Similarly, Bialystok (1990, p. 5) also argues that "intentional" is an obligation in language learning strategies.

On the other hand, another group of researchers suggest that awareness or consciousness is not a necessity in language learning strategies, such as that proposed by Williams and Burden (1997). The strategies may be intentionally used by learners, especially when these strategies are intended to help them in their learning; yet, it may also be "unintentionally" used (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 145). This may due to the fact that learners sometimes perform some language learning strategies consciously while in another occasion those strategies are unconscious. However, how strategies alter from intentional into unintentional and what is the boundary between those strategies are still difficult to define.

With regard to that idea, research notes that learners with high levels of competence tend to employ unconscious strategies (Cohen, 1996). Likewise, when learners use particular learning strategies repeatedly and continuously, it may

become a custom (Chamot, 2005). Chamot (2005) also mentions that this leads to a condition where learning strategy might turn to automaticity; yet, learners may also be able to employ those particular strategies consciously. Cohen (1990) further states that conscious and unconscious strategy can be determined by how aware those learners are in performing the strategy. If learners know which strategy they need to employ in language learning and pay deep attention to it, and they know the reason why they use it, then the strategy is conscious.

In her early work, Rubin (1975) defines learning strategies as learners' techniques to acquire knowledge. She also put forward that learning strategies are constructed by learners that contribute to the language system development and have a direct effect on learning (Rubin, 1987). MacIntyre (1994) expands the notion of learning strategies to techniques that facilitate language learning and are deliberately chosen by the learner. As Richards, Platt and Platt (1992, p. 209) point out, those learning strategies are "intentional behavior and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information". Additionally, Oxford (1993, p. 18) provides a more specific definition, which is as "specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability".

Apart from the phenomenon that experts have on different opinions about the terminology, many empirical studies on second language learning refer language learning strategies to steps, actions and behaviors that may be employed intentionally or unintentionally by language learners in order to improve their performance in both developing their knowledge and applying a target language.

Classification of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies classification is generally grouped into four broad categories, namely: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social (Oxford, 1990; 20 Cohen & Weaver, 1998; Oxford, et al. 1996). Considering the different classifications proposed by different researchers, it shows that almost all researchers have concentrated on the cognitive theory. According to Oxford (1993), there were at least more than 20 different strategies taxonomies that were brought forward by researchers in the past studies. Some classifications from several experts are such as Rubin's Taxonomy (1987), O'Malley and Chamot's Taxonomy (1990), Stern's Taxonomy (1992) and Oxford's Taxonomy (1990).

Nevertheless, Oxford's classification is considered as the most used and influential in research on language learning strategies. This assertion is emphasized by Ellis (1994, p. 536) as "the most comprehensive classification to date". Oxford (1990) divided the language learning strategies into two major groups: direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are related to the use of learners' mental processing which affects directly to learning, while indirect strategies are connected to learners' abilities to manage and support their learning which often indirectly contribute to learning of the target language. These two strategies are comprised into six other groups. The direct strategies consist of memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. On the other hand, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies are considered as indirect strategies.

Memory strategies, sometimes called mnemonics, assist learners to process, store, and retrieve information to facilitate overall language learning. Cognitive strategies are used to understand the meaning and produce the language in variety of ways such as practicing naturally, repeating, translation, analyzing, reasoning, and summarizing. Compensation strategies enable students to participate in receptive as well as productive skills even if they have insufficient knowledge of the target language. Moreover, strategies that facilitate learners to manage their learning by arranging and planning, evaluating their progress, paying attention, and monitoring their errors are metacognitive strategies. Affective strategies enable learners to control their emotions, attitudes, and motivation, while social strategies related to creating opportunities for language practice and assist to develop cultural understanding.

Factors Affecting Choice of Language Learning Strategies

Hong-Nam and Leavell (2007) say that the use of language learning strategies varies among learners because their language uses are influenced by different contexts and their society. There are some factors that influence the choice of language learning strategies. According to Oxford (1989), they are motivation, language being learned, proficiency level, years of studying the language, cultural background, and major of study.

Taguchi (2002) measured the language learning strategy use between students in an EFL context in Japan and an ESL context in Australia found that there were significant differences between students with low and high motivation in both of the countries. It was also reported that high motivated students used higher metacognitive strategies than did low motivated students.

Chamot, et al. (1987) found that Russian students reported higher strategy use than Spanish students. According to Oxford (1989), English speakers considered Spanish as an easier language than other difficult languages such as French, German, and Russian. This means that languages considering difficult by their learners might influence the language learners to employ a wider variety of language learning strategy. In addition to that, strategy use preferences may be influenced by the context in which the language is used, as foreign language or second language context.

Green and Oxford (1995) examined the strategy use of 374 Puerto Rican university students of English. The result showed that proficient students applied high use of cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and social strategies. On the other hand, proficient learners used the cognitive, compensation, and metacognitive strategy significantly more than less proficient learners among Afrikaans. The use of social strategies was more common among the less proficient learners (Dreyer & Oxford, 1996).

Oxford and Nyikos (1989) reported that students who had spent studying the language for at least four or five years used strategies far more often than did less experienced language learners. Similarly, a study conducted by Politzer (1983) found that advancement in course level affected foreign language learning strategies, with higher-level students using more positive strategies.

Lengkanawati (2004) investigated 56 students at two universities in Australia learning Indonesian as a Foreign Language (IFL) and 114 students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in a university in Indonesia, using language learning strategies. She found that EFL students in Indonesia used memory, metacognitive, and affective strategies more frequently than IFL students in Australia. On the other hand, cognitive, compensation, and social strategies were highly used in Australia. From the interview, it shows that differences in language learning strategy use were due to differences of their learning culture.

Regarding to the study of foreign language majors, Chang (2011) investigated 360 undergraduate foreign language majors at a university in central Taiwan. The respondents were majoring in English, Japanese, German, and French. The result showed that the most used category among foreign language majors was compensation strategy. The second use was social strategies and the least use was memory strategy category. English majors used compensation strategies the most; whereas Japanese and European languages majors used social strategies the most. Overall, each groups used high range of language learning strategies.

A number of researches have been conducted on the language learning strategy used by Arabic and English students. Mamat and Sideh's study (2013) showed that Arabic learners at Institute of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia applied the six language learning strategies categories at a moderate level and metacognitive strategies was the highest frequency used among these six groups. Likewise, Ebner (2012) carried out a study on language learning strategies among university-level Arabic programs in America. The findings revealed that Arabic major students were high level users of social strategies, and medium level users of compensation, metacognitive, affective, and cognitive strategies. The result of overall means showed that they were moderate users of language learning strategies. The successful students chose social strategies and cognitive category as their favorite strategies, while less successful students only preferred social strategies. Successful students also reported using every category of strategy more often than their less-successful colleagues.

Furthermore, there has been some research conducted on language learning strategies of Indonesian college students particularly related to English major students. Davis and Abbas (1991) investigated language learning strategy use of Indonesian language students from four universities. They found that the students used high level of language strategy in most of six language learning strategies. The medium level use only showed in affective strategy. Another study conducted by Aunurrahman, Kurniawati, and Ramadhiyanti (2013) investigated 201 first year students majoring in English Education. The result showed that the strategies used were at medium level. The only high frequency use was social strategies, while other strategies were applied in the middle level.

Method
Respondents
The method used in this study was comparison. This study tried to collect data from two different samples about the similarities and differences of using language learning strategies. The samples compared were 70 students majoring in Arabic and English who were in their sixth semester at the Education and Pedagogy Faculty of Islamic State University of Ar-Raniry. They were chosen because they had more experiences in the academic foreign language instructions and may therefore have different or similar experiences in language learning strategies. The respondents chosen were 35 students from the Arabic major and 35 students from the English major.

Instrument
The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning questionnaire or SILL questionnaire which was adapted from Oxford (1990, version 7.0 for ESL/EFL) was used as the instrument to collect the data. This questionnaire was chosen because as Ellis (1994) reiterates that it is the most comprehensive classification of language learning strategies to date. Furthermore, Oxford (1996: 247) states that the use of "strategy questionnaires" (SILL questionnaire) in most descriptive studies investigating the use of learners' learning strategies has not shown response bias, and might be unthreatened to most cultures.

According to Oxford and Nyikos (1989, p. 292), strategies in SILL questionnaire cover four language learning skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. It has also been used to investigate strategy use in conjunction with other variables such as learners' learning styles, motivation, cultural background, language proficiency, major of studies, and gender. Besides, it has been translated into a number of languages, such as Chinese, French, German, and Spanish (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). Oxford's SILL questionnaire appears to be the only language learning strategy instrument that has been measured for its reliability and validity. Its validity is shown by high predictive for language proficiency, learning style, and course grades (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). The reliability of SILL shows a considerable consistent, particularly measuring the difference of language learning strategies use between males and females in some setting (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995).

The SILL questionnaire consists of 50 items characterized into six subscales, they are part A on memory strategies (remembering) for items 1 to 9, part B on cognitive strategies (using mental processes) for items 10 to 23, part C on compensation strategies (making up for missing knowledge) for items 24 to 29, part D on metacognitive (organizing and evaluating learning) for items 30 to 38, part E on affective strategies (managing feelings) for items 39 to 44, and finally part F on social strategies (learning with others) for items 45 to 50. These SILL 50 items are typically evaluated based on the five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, with each number means as the following: (1) never or almost never true of me, (2) usually not true of me, (3) somewhat true of me, (4) usually true of me, and (5) always or almost always true of me.

Pilot Study and Modifications
Before distributing the SILL questionnaire, we conducted a pilot study on some students from the Arabic and English majors in the university in order to get feedback on whether the questionnaires were clearly understood or not.

The results indicated that the questionnaires had achieved the goal of reasonable completion within 20-25 minutes, depending on the number of comments that the respondents added. The respondents gave comments about the improvements in the text of the questionnaire.

Therefore, after the pilot study, some alterations on Oxford's SILL were done to suit the context of our respondents. The first one was its translation into Indonesian in order to minimize any possible misunderstandings and to enhance accuracy in interpreting the results. The second one was in the use of the five-point Likert scale that was changed to (1) I never do this, (2) I seldom do this, (3) I sometimes do this, (4) I usually do this, and (5) I always do this. The third one was the modification of Item 45 (or I45) which is "If I do not understand something in Arabic/English, I ask the other people to slow down or say it again" was reworded to "If I do not understand, I ask the speaker to slow down, repeat, or clarify what was said". The fourth one was on the change of I46 in which "the Arabic/English speakers" was changed to "other people". The fifth one was the modification of I47 that says "I practice Arabic/English with other students" was reworded to "I work with other learners of Arabic/English to practice, review, or share information". Finally, for I48, "I ask for help from Arabic/English speakers" was reworded to "I ask for help from Arabic/English teachers/lecturers".

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was distributed to every respondent in a day after their classes. It took each of them approximately 20 minutes to complete it. Additionally, data were analyzed by using statistics, specifically the Mean, by using the following formula (Weiss, 1989):

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}$$

Where $\bar{X}$ stands for the mean, Σ for summation, X for the scores, and N for the number of scores.

In order to attain the students' categories, Oxford (1990) offers a guide by which strategy usage can be calculated. To differentiate the high, medium, and low level use of language learning strategies, the mean of 5-point Likert scale was coded in three stages (see Table 1).

Table 1. The distribution of frequency use of language learning strategies.

Category/Level	Details	Range of Value
High	Always or almost always used (81-100%)	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used (61-80%)	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used (41-60%)	2.5 to 3.4
Low	Generally not used (21-40%)	1.5 to 2.4
	Never or almost never used (0-20%)	1.0 to 1.4

Based on Table 1, the scores (range of value) represent the strategy usage for each part. It supplies a number between a possible lowest score of 1, to a possible highest score of 5, for each of the six parts. Then, from each mean calculated, we then created the graphs for both Arabic and English major students as a visual representation of these groups current strategy use.

Findings and Discussion

Arabic and English Major Students' Overall Strategy Use

Figure 1 shows the results of the Arabic major students' overall means in six categories of language learning strategies.
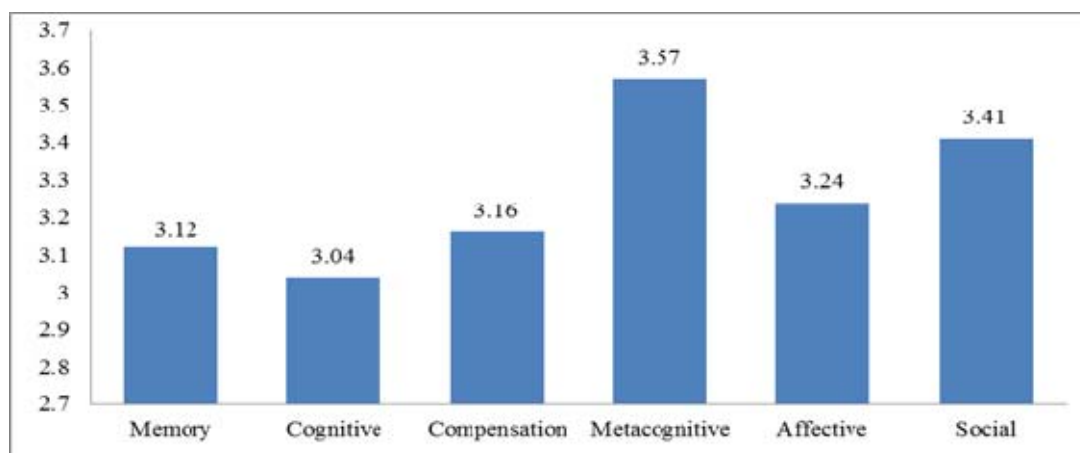
Figure 1: Arabic major students' overall means in the six categories of language learning strategies.

From Figure 1, metacognitive strategies were the highest language learning strategies preferred by Arabic major students with a mean of 3.57, with the most item selected was I33 "I try to find out how to be a better learner". Then, social strategies were in the second highest rank at the medium level with a mean score of 3.41, with the most chosen item of I47 "I work with other learners of Arabic to practice, review, or share information" (M=3.74). It was further followed by affective strategies (M=3.24), in which two items were in the high level; among the two, I40 "I encourage myself to speak even when I am afraid" (M=377) was chosen more by the learners. Next, compensation strategies (M=3.19) was in the fourth rank, with all items in this strategy in the medium level (i.e. I25 "When I can't think of a word during a conversation in Arabic, I use gestures" with M=3.4). After that, memory strategy (M=3.12) was in the fifth rank, with I4 receiving the highest pick, "I make mental pictures of a situation in which the Arabic word might be used" (M=3.65).

Finally, the least strategy preferred by these Arabic major students is the cognitive strategy (M=3.04), with most of the items in the middle category (i.e. I11 "I try to talk like native Arabic speakers" with M=3.48), except I17 "I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in Arabic" which received the lowest score (M=2.37). It can be concluded that the Arabic major students in this study mostly employed indirect strategies in language learning. This is when they accomplish and support their learning by planning, cooperating, and being creative in making opportunities for language practice.

Next, Figure 2 presents the English major students' overall means in six categories of language learning strategies.
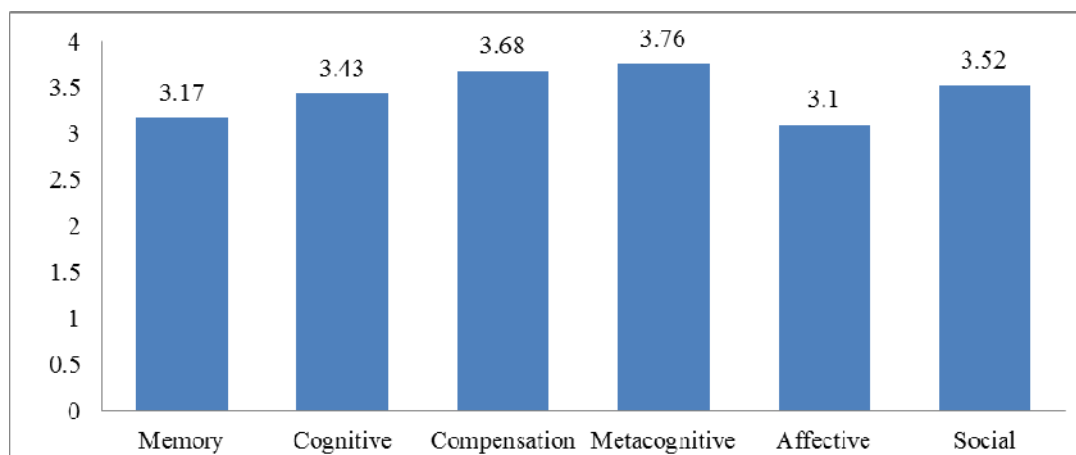

Figure 2: English major students' overall means in the six categories of language learning strategies.

Based on Figure 2 and similar to the Arabic major students, English major students also applied the metacognitive strategy at the highest level (M=3.76), with seven items in the high level (i.e. the highest mean for I32 "I pay attention when someone is speaking English" with M=4.34) and two items in the middle level. It was followed by the compensation strategy (M=3.70) in the second rank, with five items in the high level (i.e. the highest mean for I25 "When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English) and only one in the middle category. The third rank was the social strategy with a mean score of 3.52. The items in this category received four in the high level (i.e. the most pick was for I46 "I ask other people to correct me when I talk" with M=4.00) and two in the middle level.

The next strategies of cognitive, memory and affective were found to be in the middle category for the English major students. The cognitive strategy (M=3.43), had five items in the high level (i.e. with the most chosen one of I15 "I watch TV or movies spoken in English" with M=4.11) and nine items in the middle level. Afterwards, the memory strategy (M=3.17) had two items in the high level (i.e. with I2 "I use new English words in a sentence" at M=3.74 receiving more than the other), six items in the middle category and one item in the low level. Finally, the affective strategy (M=3.10) had two items in the high level (i.e. with I40 "I encourage myself to speak even when I am afraid" at M=4.08 more than the other), three items in the middle level and one item in the low level.

To conclude and similar to Arabic major students, the English major students also tended to mostly apply indirect strategies to help them learn the target language. They maintain their learning by focusing, arranging, evaluating, seeking opportunities, and lowering anxiety in using the target language (Oxford, 1990). These let students to use the target language with their peers in the teaching/learning process, and support the development of their self-confidence and determination that is needed for successful language learning. Indirect strategies do not directly affect the target language, but have a significant role in language learning because they arerelated to the management of learning (Oxford, 1990).

The Differences and Similarities between Arabic and English Major Students

Despite both majors of students mostly used indirect learning strategy in learning their target language, thus the English major students are found to use more strategies in learning compared to the Arabic major students. The English major students used 25 strategies at a high level, while Arabic major students were only reported almost half of them, with 12 strategies. The highest mean reportedly used by students of English was in the metacognitive strategy at M=4.34 (I32 "I pay attention when someone is speaking English"), whereas the highest mean reportedly used by Arabic major students was also in the metacognitive strategy at M=4.20 (I33 "I try to find out how to be a better learner"). On the other hand, the lowest mean score for English group was in the affective strategy at M=1.8 (I43 "I write down my feelings in a diary", while the lowest mean for Arabic group was in memory strategies at M=2.28 (I6 "I use flashcards to remember new Arabic/English words"), and was also employed with low level of frequency by English learners.

There were trends in each of the strategy category used by both group of respondents. In cognitive strategies, both group learners had the similar lowest frequency use for I17 "I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in Arabic/English" with M=2.37 for Arabic major students and M=2.77 for English major students. It seems that both groups tended to avoid writing as the way to practice the target language. Moreover, the strategy in I15 "I watch TV or movies spoken in (Arabic/English)" was usually employed by the English learners and only sometimes used by the Arabic learners. This might be due to the exposure of these languages in the media; English movies, shows and songs are more presented by the media compared to Arabic ones.

Regarding to the compensation category, most strategies in this category were reported to be in the high level by the English learners. This is unlike the Arabic learners who employed those strategies at the medium level. The data shows that English learners put more efforts in their speaking or writing despite lacking of vocabulary. They usually employed guessing, making gesture, looking for synonyms, and making up new words in order to overcome their problems related to their limited knowledge of the target language. On the other hand, Arabic learners tended to use

these strategies once in a while with I27 "I read (Arabic/English) without looking up every new word" to have the most pick.

In metacognitive strategies, almost all strategies were at the high level for English major students, whilst the Arabic major students only reported of using five strategies with high level. There were no strategies used in the low level by both groups. However, the strategy in I36 "I look for opportunities to read in (Arabic/English)" with M=2.94 was only rated at the medium level by both groups. Furthermore, among the highest strategies used, English major students rated the strategies of finding many ways to use English; looking for people they can talk to in English, and having clear goals for improving their language skills to be higher than did Arabic major students, who rated those strategies only in the middle level.

The affective strategies were mostly employed at the medium level by both majors. They applied strategies in I39 and I40 at the high level. Even though the strategy in I41 "I give myself a reward for doing well" was rated in the middle scale by both groups, the average scores were significantly different, with M=3.48 for Arabic learners and M=254 for English learners. In general, Arabic major students rated the affective strategies at the high and medium levels. Despite the English major students also rated almost the same for this strategy, thus there is one of the affective strategies that received the lowest score among the 50 items for these students, which is I34 "I write down my feelings in a diary" with M=1.80. Likewise, the strategies in the social strategy were rated at the high and middle levels by both groups, except for the strategy in I50 "I try to learn about the culture of (Arabic/English) speakers" in which the Arabic learners only rated it at the middle level, while English learners rated it at the high level.

In addition, in order to compare the whole strategy used among members of both groups, the overall means score were calculated and displayed in Table 2.

Table 2.Differences in overall means of reported strategy use between Arabic and English major students.

Major	1	2	3	4	5	6	Ave.
Arabic	3.12	3.04	3.16	3.57	3.24	3.41	3.25
English	3.17	3.43	3.68	3.76	3.1	3.52	3.44

Note: 1=memory, 2=cognitive, 3=compensation, 4=metacognitive, 5=affective, 6=social.

Table 2 shows that the overall means score of Oxford's six categories of language learning strategies were employed within the middle level by Arabic and English major students. The average score of strategies applied by English major students was slightly higher than the score of Arabic major students. Metacognitive strategies were chosen as the most preferred strategy by both groups. The obtained results showed that the English major students (M=3.76) surpassed the Arabic major students (M=3.57) in employing metacognitive strategy. Nevertheless, the respondents in the present study seem to be experienced language learning strategy users, using all six categories of strategies at the middle level. One possible reason for this moderate frequency of use that could be offered for this finding was that these respondents studied Arabic and English in the foreign language setting, and they are not urgently needed for their social daily lives as it is for the ESL setting (see Al-Otaibi, 2004).

Discussion

Students of Arabic and English reported using the strategies at the middle level with metacognitive strategies receiving the highest frequency of uses. This finding supported the study conducted by Chamot, et al. (1987), who found that as years of study increased in studying a foreign language, the use of cognitive strategy would decline and the use of metacognitive strategy would rise. In other words, years of study tended to influence the choice and level of language learning strategies. The samples in this study could actually be categorized as advanced students since they are already in the sixth semester studying the foreign languages. That was why metacognitive strategy took over their learning strategies.

Both of the Arabic and English major students can be regarded as high motivated students. Taguchi's research

(2002) reported that high motivated students used higher metacognitive strategies than did low motivated students. On the other hand, some studies (Politzer, 1983; Chamot, et al. 1987; Oxford, 1989) associate that the target language regarded as difficult to learn by their learners (such as French) showed that the learners applied more high strategy use than those learners who learn a language regarded as easier (such as English). Thus this finding is in contrast with the current results of this study, where the language learning strategies of the more difficult language of Arabic, that was even considered more difficult to learn by Arabic major students themselves, was found to be lesser compared to English. Here, the contexts of the languages used in the country take place (Hong-Nam &Leavell, 2007). Indonesia's national education system encouraged the learning of English more compared to Arabic. Seeing English as a global language today, this language is not only learnt by the English major students but also studied by students of other field of studies in every university, colleges, and in all school levels. Thus, English major students have more chances to practice their English with other students more frequently outside the classroom. Moreover, because of its popularity, materials for English learning are more available and easy to obtain, such as in local or public libraries. On the other hand, most students of Arabic at the university under study graduated from the traditional *pesantren* or *dayah* (Islamic boarding schools). They were obligated to use Arabic language in their daily conversations but this use was restricted to only in the school environment and lessened as they stepped out of this atmosphere. This condition is more or less similar to their university lives, where the practice of Arabic is only limited to their peers who are in the same major. Thus, it can be assumed that as the English major students are more exposed to the target language, this has assisted them in using more strategies than the Arabic major students.

By looking at the differences, the Arabic's lecturers can identify the strategies that have encouraged the English major students to be more active in using English, how they overcome their language difficulties by applying these strategies, and these lecturers can further teach or inform these strategies to their Arabic language learners. On the other hand, by identifying the language learning strategies of their learners, English lecturers can further distinguish their students' preferences and weaknesses in learning the target language. To improve Arabic and English teaching, language learning strategies can be promoted in daily teaching by providing a wide range of learning strategies to students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and the discussions presented in this paper, the Arabic major students applied metacognitive strategy at a high level, while other strategies (memory, cognitive, compensation, affective, and social) were used at lower levels. Meanwhile, the English major students also favored metacognitive strategy as the most used one, but compensation and social strategies were also in their high preferences. Thus, memory, cognitive, and affective strategies were applied in the medium level.

Different uses of language learning strategies category between Arabic and English major students were also found. Even though both majors had similar preferences on metacognitive strategy, hence, the mean score of English major students surpassed the Arabic major students. Regarding to items in language learning strategies, using flashcards was used in low range by both groups. On the other hand, the highest mean score for English major students was paying attention when someone was speaking, while Arabic major students was trying to find out how to be better learners. Regardless of the language learning strategies that were applied differently by both majors, the overall mean value for both groups were at the medium level.

We acknowledge that the limitation of this study is on the survey of a small number of respondents, therefore future research in the same topic are recommended to employ more respondents to help reveal significant insights into the strategic processes of learning different languages. It is suggested to focus on not only identifying how different they are in strategy use but also why they are different. Nonetheless, this pilot study suggests that foreign language teachers should teach on how to use language learning strategies to their students continuously so that the students can make learning more resourceful and deal with language learning difficulties more competently.

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استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة لدى متعلمي اللغة العربية والانجليزية كاللغة الأجنبية

Fithriyah, Usman Kasim, Yunisrina Qismullah Yusuf*

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف ميول الطلاب في استخدام استراتيجيات تعلم لغات بدولة إندونيسيا؛ لأن هاتين اللغتين أكثر اللغات تعلما في إقليم أتشية إندونيسيا ،ووزعت الاستبانة على70 طالبا من قسمي اللغة العربية والانجليزية في إحدى الجامعات في بندا أتشية إندونيسيا، وكانوا يجيبون الأسئلة عن قائمة استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة التي تم تعديلها .فأظهرت نتيجة الدراسة أن معظم طلبة قسم اللغة العربية يفضلون مجال معرفي على استراتيجيات الست الأخرى، بينما طلبة قسم اللغة الانجليزية يبدو أنهم يهتمون بأكثر استراتيجيات في تعلمهم وهي مجال معرفي، ويليه استراتيجية التعويض واستراتيجية الاجتماع، بناء على ما سبق تقترح هذه استراتيجيات في تعلم اللغات حتى تكون عملية العليم فعالة.

الكلمات الدالة: استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة، قسم اللغة العربية، قسم اللغة الانجليزية، متعلم اللغة الأجنبية.