



The Levels of Language Learning Strategies Employed by Turkish High School Students

Arif Sariçoban

Selçuk University

Aybüke Karadayioğlu

Selçuk University

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the levels of language learning strategies employed by A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language. In the Turkish formal education system, English is a compulsory subject in all public and private schools, and students start to learn English from 2nd grade at the elementary level to 12th grade at the secondary level. While they are learning English only a few of them become successful and be able to express themselves during the communication process. The research used a quantitative study to show the findings statistically. LLS inventory was administered to 129 high school students from A1 to A2 level. The survey is applied to teenagers who study in Imam Hatip High School (Religious High School) (RHS) and Anatolian High School (AHS). Students' ages range from 15 to 18. The findings indicated that students have a moderate level of LLS usage. The analysis of the results from gender difference in LLS use conveys a message that there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of cognitive, compensation, affective and social strategy use. However, memory strategies differ in favor of females, whereas metacognitive strategies differ in favor of males. In the study, it was found that there is no significant difference between AHS and RHS students except for the usage of memory strategies which differs significantly in favor of Religious High School students.

INTRODUCTION

English is the *lingua franca* of science, technology, and business. In the Turkish educational system, English is regarded as a foreign language (EFL). English is a compulsory subject in all public and private schools. In the Turkish formal education system, students start to learn English from 2nd grade at the elementary level to 12th grade at the secondary level. While they are learning English only a few of them become successful and be able to express themselves during the communication process. There are many factors that affect the rate of learning, such as teacher's attitude, learning strategies, and students' beliefs about learning English. Oxford (1990) explained that language learning strategies are the behaviors or acts that learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed, and enjoyable. As a result, perpetual and consistent use of language learning strategies is necessary. Therefore, this paper aims to examine

the levels of language learning strategies employed by A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language.

Language Learning Strategies

Several studies showed that learning strategies play a significant role in successful language learning. Language learning strategies have been defined by many scholars. Wenden and Rubin (1987) define learning strategies as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information" (p.19). Richards and Platt (1992) described learning strategies as "intentional behavior and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information" (p.209). Also, Tarone (1981) defined language learning strategy as "an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language and transferring these into one's interlanguage competence" (p.67). It is known that there is no one magical way to learn a language successfully. According to Brown (2001), successful learners have achieved their goals in language learning only through the deliberate and systematic application of language strategies. The teacher's role here is to show the different language learning strategies and helping them to find their own learning way. Brown (2001) stated that the main goal of language teachers is to "equip their students with a sense of what successful language learners do to achieve success and to aid them in developing their own unique, individual pathways to success" (p. 208).

Successful language learners are usually people who know how to manipulate learning techniques according to their language needs. The language learning strategies play an active role for students to become more autonomous learners. Learning strategies are good evidences if students are autonomous learners or they just use these strategies to pass the test or not, which means that they are not using learning strategies in the deep sense (Oxford, 1996). Researchers like O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and Oxford and Ehrman (1995) assert that as long as the learners make use of the strategies in an efficient way, the strategies will have an effect on their language performance, achievement, proficiency, and autonomy beliefs. Thus, it is essential for the learners to use learning strategies in their language learning process.

Classification of learning strategies

Classification of learning strategies has been done by many scholars. O'Malley, et. al. (1987) divided language learning strategies into three main subcategories: Metacognitive Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, and Socio-affective Strategies (as cited in Hardan, 2013, p. 1718). Metacognitive Strategies mean that monitoring one's own learning process, and evaluating learning after. Cognitive strategies are one type of learning strategy that learners use in order to learn more successfully. Socio-affective strategies can include questions like using social interactions to help understanding or learning information.

According to Rubin, there are three main strategies that are used by learners to facilitate directly or indirectly language learning; learning strategies, communication strategies, and social strategies (Rubin, 1987, as cited in Hardan, 2013, p. 1718).

In 1990, Rebecca Oxford published her landmark book "*Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*" which included a questionnaire "Strategy Inventory for Language Learning" or "SILL". Oxford's (1990) taxonomy divides learning strategies into two basic groups as direct and indirect strategies and classifies them into 6 sub-groups:

Direct Strategies

- a. Memory Strategies: These strategies enable the transfer of information to long-term memory and recalling it for communication.
- b. Cognitive Strategies: Used for creating mental models, revising and receiving, and generating messages in the target language, these are mental strategies utilized by students for making inferences out of what they have learned.
- c. Compensation Strategies: These strategies enable students to overcome the difficulties of communication by referring to body language and making logical guesses.

Indirect Strategies

- a. Metacognitive Strategies: These are the strategies that allow the students to plan, organize and evaluate their own learning process
- b. Affective Strategies: These strategies help learners control their feelings, motivation, and attitudes related to learning.
- c. Social Strategies: These strategies are helpful for interaction with others (pp.299-300).

The research questions

The aim of this study is to examine the levels of language learning strategies employed by A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language. To this end, the sub-problems of this research were formulated as follows:

1. What are the levels of learning strategies employed by A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between the LLS and gender?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between the LLS and school type?

Method

In this study quantitative method was utilized. For the ultimate purpose of the current study LLS inventory (Oxford, 1990) translated into Turkish by Cesur and Fer (2007) was administered to 129 high school students from A1 to A2 level. The inventory is a five-point Likert-type scale on the use of LLS that consists of 50 items. Variables, measuring demographic characteristics by means of a classification scale and information about such as gender, age, and school type are included. The direct strategies include 29 items, 9 of which are about memory strategies, 14 of which are about cognitive, and the rest six of which are about compensation strategies. The reliability level of the original scale was found .92. As to the current study the reliability level was obtained .856. The alpha score for each direct strategy was found as .734 for metacognitive strategies items, .781 for cognitive strategies items, and .751 for compensatory items. The indirect strategies consist of 21 items, 9 of them are about metacognitive strategies, 6 of them are about affective strategies, and the last 6 of them are about social strategies. The alpha score for each indirect strategy was found as .832 for metacognitive strategies, .715 for affective strategies, .743 for social strategies.

Participants

The survey is applied to teenagers who study in three different types of schools. Those schools are RHS, and AHS. Students' ages range from 15 to 18. All of them are A1 and A2 level learners of EFL. A total of 129 students participated in each of the surveys. There are 80 females and 49 males. 55 of them study in RHS, 74 students are enrolled in AHS.

Data Collection Procedures

Literature was reviewed to gather information about LLS. After that, the LLS inventory (Oxford, 1990) translated into Turkish by Cesur and Fer (2007) was administered to 129 high school students from A1 to A2 level. For the purpose of clarity, a Turkish version of the questionnaire is preferred. The translators of this questionnaire already verified its reliability and validity through confirmatory factor analysis. Cesur and Fer (2007) stated that:

Pearson's correlations between Turkish and English versions of the survey ranging from, except for the items 5., 12. and 29., .38 to .91 among the 6 subscales indicated acceptable reliability. The correlations were significant at the .00 and .01 level. The results of factor analysis for construct validity of the inventory addressed six dimensional constructs with 47 items. The total internal reliability of scale was .92 reliability coefficients. Findings demonstrated that the subscales had internal consistency reliabilities, item total correlation, ranged from .27 to .62. Test re-test reliability for external reliability of subscales was between .67-.82 (p.49).

The obtained results show that the questionnaire is reliable enough to use. The survey is conducted on google forms and delivered to students through online platforms. The relationship among gender, school type, and LLS usage is investigated. After gathering the samples, the results were examined through SPSS.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, which calculated the frequencies and mean scores. The reliability analysis of *LLS* inventory consisting of 50 items was found $r=.85$, which indicates that the test is highly reliable at a 0.05 significance level as commonly used in social sciences. In order to find out whether the findings are parametric or non-parametric, the normality distribution was tested with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Because the studied groups are heterogenic, the scale groups did not exhibit a normal distribution, according to the results. Data from male students, in particular, do not reveal a normal distribution. Because the findings did not match the criterion ($p > 0.05$), the analysis was conducted using non-parametric approaches.

Results

The levels of learning strategies employed A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language

For the ultimate purpose of the study, the levels of learning strategies employed by A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language have been investigated and it is reported that the regarding level was found $M=3.16$, which is a moderate level.

Table 1. The Levels of LLS

Dimensions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Memory	129	1,67	4,89	3,3084	,66944
Cognitive	129	1,50	4,36	3,1406	,63493
Compensation	129	1,00	5,00	3,1860	,79512
Metacognitive	129	1,56	4,78	3,3144	,77019
Affective	129	1,00	4,83	2,8320	,81076
Social	129	1,33	5,00	3,0633	,80612
LLS Total	129	1,86	4,22	3,1612	,42842

A further analysis indicated different levels regarding memory (M=3.30), cognitive (M=3.14), compensation (M=3.18), metacognitive (M=3.31), affective (M=2.83), and social (M=3.06) strategies.

The participants of the study stated that their level of memory strategies is (M=3.30) which is a moderate level of strategy use. They reported that they are often able to make connections between their background and current knowledge (M=3.72), try to recall the new words and word phrases when they encounter first time (M=3.67), use the new word in a sentence (M=3.55), recall the new word from its context (M=3.50), try to make associations between the new word and its visual (M=3.34), and try to make use of homophones of the new words (M=3.31). It can be speculated that the participants of the study prefer to utilize visual memory strategies and the homophones of the new words and word phrases.

Table 2. Memory Strategies

Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Memory1	129	1,00	5,00	3,7209	1,03060
Memory2	129	1,00	5,00	3,5504	1,03048
Memory3	129	1,00	5,00	3,3488	1,32081
Memory4	129	1,00	5,00	3,5039	1,06891
Memory5	129	1,00	5,00	3,3178	1,27466
Memory6	129	1,00	5,00	2,6977	1,40648
Memory7	129	1,00	5,00	2,6977	1,28455
Memory8	129	1,00	5,00	3,2636	1,06448
Memory9	129	1,00	5,00	3,6744	1,10512
Valid N	129				

The cognitive strategies usage level of the participants was found (M=3.14) which indicates a moderate level of strategy use. They described that they repeat or write the new word a couple of times (M=3.65), they watch English TV shows or films (M=3.60), they look for the newly

learned English words that are similar in Turkish (M=3.55), they like reading in English (M=3.41), they try to speak like native speakers (M=3.39), they try to find patterns in English (M=3.37), they try not to translate word for word (M=3.26), they use the words they know in different ways (M=3.23). The findings show that participants generally repeat the newly learned word or vocabulary items to remember better or try to find repetitive patterns in English. They tend to watch English TV shows and try to make associations between their mother language and English. It is moderately important to sound like natives for the participants. They usually focus on the whole meaning rather than translation word by word, which is an important skill for reading comprehension and speaking.

Table 3. Cognitive Strategies

Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cognitive10	129	1,00	5,00	3,6589	1,18912
Cognivite11	129	1,00	5,00	3,3953	1,18202
Cognitive12	129	1,00	5,00	2,8837	1,14992
Cognitive13	129	1,00	5,00	3,2326	1,04217
Cognivite14	129	1,00	5,00	2,5814	1,29118
Cognitive15	129	1,00	5,00	3,6047	1,41100
Cognitive16	129	1,00	5,00	3,4186	1,42904
Cognitive17	129	1,00	5,00	2,6512	1,33259
Cognitive18	129	1,00	5,00	2,6047	1,30155
Cognitive19	129	1,00	5,00	3,5581	1,20485
Cognitive20	129	1,00	5,00	3,3798	1,25121
Cognitive21	129	1,00	5,00	3,1163	1,21596
Cognitive22	129	1,00	5,00	3,2636	1,25324
Cognitive23	129	1,00	5,00	2,6202	1,13326
Valid N	129				

The level of compensation strategy use is found (M=3.18). It is shown that participants have a moderate level of compensation strategy use. According to participants' answers, it can be concluded that they make guesses about unknown English words (M=3.60), if they do not remember the word, they use a different word or phrase with similar meaning (M=3.48), while speaking English they predict what the other person will say next (M=3.20). All of the data represent that to compensate for limitations in their language, they try to predict the meaning of unknown words or phrases or what the other speaker will say and prefer close-meaning words or phrases.

Table 4. Compensation Strategies

Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Compensation24	129	1,00	5,00	3,6047	1,12096
Compensation25	129	1,00	5,00	3,0543	1,27665
Compensation26	129	1,00	5,00	2,6357	1,28658
Compensation27	129	1,00	5,00	3,1318	1,25859
Compensation28	129	1,00	5,00	3,2093	1,14342
Compensation29	129	1,00	5,00	3,4806	1,03909
Valid N	129				

The participants of the study stated that their level of metacognitive strategies is (M=3.31) which is a moderate level of strategy use. From the finding it can be seen that participants pay attention when someone speaks English (M=3.82), they try to find out how to be a better learner (M=3.53), they notice their mistakes and use them to be better in English (M=3.46), they evaluate their progress in English (M=3.41). Based on the analysis, participants' awareness of when someone speaks English is close to the "often true for me" option in the inventory. They monitor and evaluate their learning process, and use their mistakes to promote their learning process. They have basic metacognitive aids such as connecting the new knowledge with previous ones, selecting learning strategies deliberately, and planning, evaluating the learning process.

Table 5. Metacognitive Strategies

Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Metecognitive30	129	1,00	5,00	3,1705	1,13965
Metacognitive31	129	1,00	5,00	3,4651	1,06100
Metacognitive32	129	1,00	5,00	3,8217	1,04918
Metacognitive33	129	1,00	5,00	3,5349	1,17291
Metacognitive34	129	1,00	5,00	2,7907	1,18371
Metacognitive35	129	1,00	5,00	3,2171	1,33441
Metacognitive36	129	1,00	5,00	3,1628	1,26114
Metacognitive37	129	1,00	5,00	3,2481	1,23763
Metacognitive38	129	1,00	5,00	3,4186	1,14358
Valid N	129				

The level of affective strategy use is found (M=2.83) that indicates participants have below moderate level of affective strategy usage. It can be deduced that they notice if they are tense or nervous when they are studying or using English (M=3.53), they try to keep calm relax whenever they feel afraid of using English (M=3.22), they encourage themselves to speak SL even if they are afraid of making mistakes (M=3.10). It is clear that participants use affective strategies less than other strategies. They try to lower their anxiety level and encourage themselves but taking the control of their emotions is weak. They seldom share their feeling and emotions with others while learning English.

Table 6. Affective Strategies

Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Affective39	129	1,00	5,00	3,2248	1,19400
Affective40	129	1,00	5,00	3,1085	1,26392
Affective41	129	1,00	5,00	2,7597	1,35655
Affective42	129	1,00	5,00	3,5349	1,21222
Affective43	129	1,00	5,00	1,9070	1,27133
Affective44	129	1,00	5,00	2,4574	1,26866
Valid N	129				

The social strategy usage level of the participants was found (M=3.06) which refers to a moderate level of strategy usage. The findings explain that they ask to speak slowly or repeat if they do not understand it (M=3.63, they ask for correction if they make mistake while speaking (M=3.27), they try to learn about the culture of native speakers (M=3.26), they ask for help from English speakers when they need (M=3.24). It can be inferred from the results that students generally ask for clarification if they do not understand something. They are eager to learn the English culture and positive for asking help from others to succeed the communication.

Table 7. Social Strategies

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social45	129	1,00	5,00	3,6357	1,21152
Social46	129	1,00	5,00	3,2713	1,14395
Social47	129	1,00	5,00	2,1628	1,19105
Social48	129	1,00	5,00	3,2403	1,27338
Social49	129	1,00	5,00	2,8062	1,23160
Social50	129	1,00	5,00	3,2636	1,25324
Valid N	129				

The difference between the LLS and gender

The sub-components of LLS which are differed significantly by gender are memory and metacognitive strategies based on the results of the Mann-Whitney U test. It can be interpreted that there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of cognitive, compensation, affective and social strategy use. Memory strategies differ in favor of females whereas metacognitive strategies differ in favor of males.

Table 8. Analysis of LLS inventory on the basis of gender

Sub-components of LLS	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Memory	female	80	73,76	5901,00	-3,408	.001
	male	49	50,69	2484,00		
Cognitive	female	80	68,20	5456,00	-1,243	.214
	male	49	59,78	2929,00		

Compensation	female	80	62,29	4983,50	-1,054	.292
	male	49	69,42	3401,50		
Metacognitive	female	80	58,31	4664,50	-2,603	.009
	male	49	75,93	3720,50		
Affective	female	80	63,28	5062,00	-,672	.502
	male	49	67,82	3323,00		
Social	female	80	61,06	4884,50	-1,535	.125
	male	49	71,44	3500,50		

The Mann-Whitney U test analysis of the memory questions shows that females are better at thinking of the relationships between prior knowledge and the new ones. Again there is a significant difference in favor of females in terms of using visual learning strategies. It is found out that females include body movements to learn the new words or phrases more than males do.

Table. 9 Analysis of Memory Questions on the basis of Gender

Questions	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
memory1	female	80	71,08	5686,50	-2,461	.014
	male	49	55,07	2698,50		
memory2	female	80	65,58	5246,50	-,235	.814
	male	49	64,05	3138,50		
memory3	female	80	71,06	5685,00	-2,415	.016
	male	49	55,10	2700,00		
memory4	female	80	72,12	5769,50	-2,900	.004
	male	49	53,38	2615,50		
memory5	female	80	69,31	5544,50	-1,714	.086
	male	49	57,97	2840,50		
memory6	female	80	67,04	5363,00	-,813	.416
	male	49	61,67	3022,00		
memory7	female	80	70,76	5660,50	-2,305	0.21
	male	49	55,60	2724,50		
memory8	female	80	66,66	5333,00	-,669	.503
	male	49	62,29	3052,00		
memory9	female	80	70,90	5672,00	-2,381	.017
	male	49	55,37	2713,00		

The Mann-Whitney U test analysis of the metacognitive questions shows that males are better at thinking of their learning process and methods. There is a significant difference in favor of males in terms of finding different ways of learning a foreign language. Also, men are better

than women at paying attention to an English speaker and creating opportunities to speak and read the target language.

Table 10. Analysis of Metacognitive Questions on the basis of Gender

Questions	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
metecognitive30	female	80	59,37	4749,50	-2,265	.024
	male	49	74,19	3635,50		
metacognitive31	female	80	62,16	4973,00	-1,152	.249
	male	49	69,63	3412,00		
metacognitive32	female	80	59,55	4764,00	-2,208	.027
	male	49	73,90	3621,00		
metacognitive33	female	80	60,28	4822,00	-1,897	.058
	male	49	72,71	3563,00		
metacognitive34	female	80	60,91	4873,00	-1,642	.101
	male	49	71,67	3512,00		
metacognitive35	female	80	60,06	4805,00	-1,965	.049
	male	49	73,06	3580,00		
metacognitive36	female	80	59,58	4766,00	-2,159	.031
	male	49	73,86	3619,00		
metacognitive37	female	80	61,42	4913,50	-1,436	.151
	male	49	70,85	3471,50		
metacognitive38	female	80	63,02	5041,50	-,795	.426
	male	49	68,23	3343,50		

The difference between the LLS and school type

According to the analysis of the result of the Mann-Whitney U test, there is no significant difference between RHS students and AHS students in terms of language learning strategy usage. The analysis of the sub-dimensions of LLS reveals no significant difference between the groups in terms of cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategy usage. On the other hand, it was found that usage of memory strategies differed in favor of RHS.

Table 11. Analysis of LLS inventory for school type

Dimensions	School Type	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
LLS Total	RHS	5	65,55	3605,00	-,143	.886
		5				
Memory	AHS	7	64,59	4780,00	3,626	.000
		4				
	RHS	5	78,82	4335,00		
		5				
Cognitive	AHS	7	54,73	4050,00	-,365	.715
		4				
	RHS	5	63,61	3498,50		
		5				

Compensation	AHS	74	66,03	4886,50	-,466	.641
	RHS	55	63,23	3477,50		
Metacognitive	AHS	74	66,32	4907,50	-	.287
	RHS	55	60,95	3352,00		
Affective	AHS	74	68,01	5033,00	-,131	.896
	RHS	55	65,50	3602,50		
Social	AHS	74	64,63	4782,50	-,310	.756
	RHS	55	66,18	3640,00		
	AHS	74	64,12	4745,00		

From the analysis of the memory strategy questions with the Mann-Whitney U test, it can be interpreted that the RHS students use new words in a sentence to remember them more than AHS students. It is found that RHS students associate the sound of a new word and a picture of the word to remember the word more than AHS students. RHS students review English lessons more often, and more of them choose visual learning strategies than AHS students.

Table.12 Analysis of Memory strategy questions for school type

Questions	School Type	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Memory1	RHS	55	64,05	3522,50	-,261	.794
	AHS	74	65,71	4862,50		
Memory2	RHS	55	72,54	3989,50	-2,055	.040
	AHS	74	59,40	4395,50		
Memory3	RHS	55	73,52	4043,50	-2,289	.022
	AHS	74	58,67	4341,50		
Memory4	RHS	55	71,58	3937,00	-1,809	.070
	AHS	74	60,11	4448,00		
Memory5	RHS	55	71,04	3907,00	-1,621	.105
	AHS	74	60,51	4478,00		
Memory6	RHS	55	78,84	4336,00	-3,723	.000
	AHS	74	54,72	4049,00		
Memory7	RHS	55	71,31	3922,00	-1,704	.088
	AHS	74	60,31	4463,00		

Memory8	RHS	55	74,07	4074,00	-2,463	.014
	AHS	74	58,26	4311,00		
Memory9	RHS	55	72,98	4014,00	-2,173	.030
	AHS	74	59,07	4371,00		

Conclusion and Discussion

The aim of this study is to examine the levels of language learning strategies employed by A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language. To find the answers, the levels of language learning strategies used by A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language, the difference between the LLS and gender, LLS, and school type was examined. The findings indicated that students have a moderate level of LLS usage. Memory, metacognitive, cognitive, social, and compensation strategy usage level is moderate but affective strategy usage level is below average. The analysis of the results from gender difference in LLS use conveys a message that there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of cognitive, compensation, affective and social strategy use. However, memory strategies differ in favor of females whereas metacognitive strategies differ in favor of males. In the study, it was found that there is no significant difference between AHS and RHS students except for the usage of memory strategies which differs significantly in favor of RHS students.

The importance of language learning strategies in language learning and teaching is very well documented in the literature (e.g. Flavell, 1979; Green and Oxford, 1995; Paris and Winograd, 1990; Zohreh Eslami and Ranjbari, 2003, as cited in Al-Buainain, 2010). In the language classroom, learners use different language learning strategies in performing the tasks and processing the new input they face. In the research, levels of learning strategies employed A1-A2 level high school students while learning English as a foreign language have been investigated and it is reported that the regarding level is moderate. The highest level of language learning strategy employed by participants was metacognitive strategies and the other is memory strategies. On the other hand, the level of affective strategies that the participants use is found below average. It can be concluded that the participants do not reflect their feeling about their learning process. They try to control their anxiety level and keep themselves motivated but taking the control of their emotions is weak. The level of memory strategies of the participants was found moderate and they reported that they are often able to make associations between their previous and current knowledge. Participants generally use visual memory strategies and the homophones of the new words and word phrases to memorize the new items in the target language. The level of cognitive strategies usage of the participants was found moderate. They repeat or write the new item, they try to make associations between their mother language and the target language. They put efforts to sound like native ones and try to learn English from other sources like T.V shows and reading books. The means of the participants' answers show that they usually focus on the whole meaning rather than translation word by word. This is an important strategy for reading comprehension and speaking that educators desire. The level of compensation strategy use is found moderate. From the participants' answers, it can be inferred that they make guesses about unknown English words, and if they do not remember the word, they use a different word or phrase with a similar meaning. While communicating in English they predict what the other person will say next. Additionally, the level of metacognitive strategies is found moderate, too. From the findings, it can be speculated

that the participants have basic metacognitive aids. They can evaluate their learning process, and use their mistakes to promote their learning process. The social strategy usage level of the participants refers to a moderate level of strategy usage. The findings show that students generally ask for clarification if they do not understand something and they are eager to learn the English culture and ready to ask for help from others to continue the communication.

According to the results from gender difference in LLS use, there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of cognitive, compensation, affective and social strategy use. However, memory strategies differ in favor of females, whereas metacognitive strategies differ in favor of males. It could be argued that females are better at associating prior knowledge and the new ones and they use visual learning strategies more than male students. The analysis of the metacognitive questions of the inventory in terms of gender shows that there is a significant difference in favor of males in terms of finding different ways of learning a foreign language. Also, men are better than women at paying attention to an English speaker and creating opportunities to speak and read the target language. Altay and Saracaloğlu (2017) found in their study that memory strategies differ in favor of females, and metacognitive strategies differ in favor of males. Aslan (2009, as cited in Altay and Saracaloğlu 2017) found that there is no significant difference in Cognitive and Recovery Strategies in terms of gender.

In the interpretation of the results, it was found that there is no significant difference between AHS students and RHS students in terms of cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategy usage. However, the results show that the usage of memory strategies differed in favor of RHS. This may be caused by the difference in the education program. In RHS, the teaching program has more lessons that require students to use memory strategies such as Holy Quran classes.

The current study used quantitative methods to find answers to the research questions. Qualitative methods could not be used in the current study due to COVID-19 conditions during which the study was conducted. Therefore, it is recommended that although the study coincides with previous studies, qualitative research methods should be applied to find more coherent and meaningful results.

REFERENCES

- Al-Buainain, H. (2010). Language Learning Strategies Employed by English Majors at Qatar University: Questions and Queries. *Asiatic, Journal of English Language and Literature*, 4, 92–120.
- Altay, B., & Saracaloğlu, A. S. (2017). Investigation on the Relationship among Language Learning Strategies, Critical Thinking and Self-Regulation Skills in Learning English. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, 11(1), 1–26.
- Aslan, O. (2009). *The role of gender and language learning strategies in learning English*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Graduate School of Social Sciences, Middle East Technical University, Turkey.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Cesur, M.O., & Fer, S. (2007). What is the validity and reliability study of the strategy inventory of language learning? *Yüzüncü Yıl University, Journal of Education Faculty*, 4, 49-74.

- Al-Buainain, Qatar University, Qatar, H. (2010). Language Learning Strategies Employed by English Majors at Qatar University: Questions and Queries. *Asiatic: IIUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, 4(2), 92–120.
<https://journals.iium.edu.my/asiatic/index.php/ajell/article/view/525>
- Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive–developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist*, 34(10), 906–911. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.34.10.906>
- Green, J. & Oxford, R. (1995). A closer look at learning strategies, L2 proficiency and gender. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(2), 261–297.
- Hardan, A. A. (2013). Language Learning Strategies: A General Overview. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 106, 1712–1726. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.12.194>.
- Rubin, J. (1987). Learning strategies: Theoretical assumptions, research history, and typology. In Wenden, A., & Rubin, J (Eds.), 15–30. *Learner strategies in language learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice-Hall.
- Tarone, E. (1981). Some Thoughts on the Notion of Communication Strategy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 15(3), 285–295.
- O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., Stewner-Manzanares, G., Kupper, L., & Russo, R. P. (1985). Learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate esl students. *Language Learning*, 35(1), 21–46. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1985.tb01013.x>
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston, Mass: Heinle & Heinle.
- Oxford, R.L., 1996. *Language Learning Strategies Around the World: Cross-cultural Perspectives*. Manoa: University of Hawaii Press.
- Oxford, R. L., & Ehrman, M. E. (1995). Adults' language learning strategies in an Intensive foreign language program in the United States. *System*, 23(3), 359–386. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251x\(95\)00023-d](https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251x(95)00023-d)
- Paris, S. G., & Winograd, P. (1990). How metacognition can promote academic learning and instruction. In B. F. Jones & L. Idol (Eds.), *Dimensions of thinking and cognitive instruction* (pp. 15–51). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Richards, J. C., Platt, J. T., & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. Essex, England: Longman.
- Wenden, A. L., & Rubin, J. (1987). *Learner Strategies in Language Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

***Arif Sariçoban** is currently working as a Senior Professor in the Department of English Language Teaching, Konya Selçuk University. He has trained numerous pre-service EFL teachers and worked as an academician at diverse universities in Turkey. He is the head of ELT department. Dr. Sariçoban is the editor-in chief for an international journal.*

Email: saricobanarif@gmail.com

***Aybüke Karadayıođlu** is currently working at Ministry of National Education (MEB) as an EFL teacher in a high school in Konya. She graduated from Anadolu University with a BA in ELT in 2019. She is doing a master's degree at Selçuk University in ELL department.*

Email: aybuke_k@hotmail.com