

Language Learning Strategies of Vietnamese EFL Freshmen

Bui Thi Kieu Giang

Center for Foreign Languages and Applied Infomatics
Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry
Quyét Thang Commune, Thai Nguyen City, Vietnam

Vu Van Tuan

English Faculty B1
Hanoi University of Business and Technology
Vinh Tuy Ward, Hai Ba Trung Dist, Ha Noi City, Vietnam

Abstract

This quantitative research aims to investigate the language learning strategies used by Vietnamese EFL freshmen, and to examine the differences in the students' use of English language learning strategies according to their English proficiency. A total of 124 first year students from Hanoi University of Business and Technology were selected as the respondents using probability sampling methods. All the participants learned English as a compulsory academic subject. The data collection instruments of the study were questionnaires adapted from Language Strategy Use Inventory by Andrew D. Cohen, Rebecca Oxford, and Julie C. Chi (2005). The major findings of the study showed that the success of language teaching and learning are determined by the effective choices of language learning strategies. The findings of the study benefit for not only the teachers being aware of students' learning styles and language choice, but also the students cooperating firmly with their teachers to master the effective language learning strategies.

Keyword: Language Learning Strategies (LLSs), English as a second language (ESL), English as a foreign language (EFL), Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Second Language (L2).

Cite as: Giang ,B.T.K.,& Tuan,V.V. (2018). Language Learning Strategies of Vietnamese EFL Freshmen. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (3), 61-83.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no3.5>

1. Introduction

Language is the most important and meaningful tool among people. People use one language to exchange with each other. In fact, a few languages are spoken commonly by million people whereas many other languages are used by particular people. Currently, English is regarded as an international language fluently used by 1.5 billion speakers worldwide, (Sawe, 2017). Thus, English is taught as either foreign language or a second language (L2) at all levels of the educational system in many countries in the world. Many researches have been done on second language acquisition (SLA) in general and English learning in particular. Moeller and Catalano (2015) state that ‘foreign language learning and teaching refer to the teaching or learning of a nonnative language outside of the environment where it is commonly spoken’ (p. 327). In fact, learners may have different ways of acquiring L2, many researches have shown the importance of language learning strategies for learners who want to be successful at SLA. Language learning strategies (LLSs) are likened as a means that learners need them for the acquisition, storage, use of information, retrieval, and enhance learners’ self-confidence.

The term “language learning strategies” can be interpreted by Oxford (2002, p. 124) as “specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing second language (L2) skills”. LLSs direct English as a second language (ESL)/English as a foreign language (EFL) learners to get improved in their language proficiency development in their own way. The term “language proficiency”, or in other word “linguistic proficiency” means that an ESL/EFL learner has a good command of using English. As shown in the studies on LLSs such as Oxford (2003), Kato (2005), Lee and Heinz (2016), and other authors, the results confirmed that ESL/EFL learners have employed a variety of LLSs to get advanced in learning English, and the extent of their use is not too low. In fact, it is necessary for EFL/ESL learners to adapt LLSs because learning approach is changing day after day in order to keep up with the social development.

Vietnam has implemented many innovated policies in order to update school leavers with a good command of foreign languages, especially English competence. To improve the foreign language ability of Vietnamese learners, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) launched National Foreign Languages Project scheme, period 2008-2020 with the focus on teaching mainly English as a second language, not as a foreign language. Although the government has invested a lot of effort and money in improving the quality of SLA, the result has not come up with the expectation of the whole society. In fact, there is a strong practical bias in finding effective methods on improving the teaching SLA. Not many studies have been done on LLSs until now. In other words, there is a shift from teacher-centered teaching to learner-centered teaching, the role of LLSs has not got much attention in terms of SLA in the Vietnamese educational system. From this situation, the study is conducted on English language learning strategies used by first year students at Hanoi University of Business and Technology (HUBT). This study clarifies the frequency of English LLSs used by first year students and the possible link between their strategy use and language proficiency based on their first semester GPAs. The findings of this study would contribute to help students not only at HUBT scale but also other universities choose appropriate LLSs in SLA.

2. Literature Review

2.1 An overview of Second Language Acquisition.

SLA is the process of acquiring a second or foreign language. The concept “SLA” dates back to approximately the second half of the twentieth century. SLA refers to the systematic study of how people learn a second language (L2). The word “second” may refer to any language that is not learners’ mother tongue. Besides, “second” is not intended to contrast with “foreign”, any language out of learners’ mother tongue that is used is called “second” language acquisition no matter where the context happens. In other words, any language other than mother tongue learners try to acquire in any circumstance is defined as SLA (Rod, 2003 p.3). Take the following idea for the clarification of the importance for our understanding SLA. When we study human language, we are approaching what some might call the human essence, the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to [humans].

(Chomsky, 2006, p.88)

It is quite surprised with the distinction of Krashen (1982) when he differentiated the two terms “acquisition” and “learning”, in spite of the fact that they refer to the action to “master” a language. His viewpoint was that these two terms are dissimilar from each other, and they are classified into two different systems namely, the “acquired” system and the “learned” system. According to his opinions, acquisition refers to the subconscious process of studying the language while learners are not consciously aware of grammatical rules of the language. Furthermore, learning a language means “knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them” (p.10). Krashen concludes that “the acquired system” or acquisition is more effective than “the learned system” or learning. One more approach to the SLA was done by Grass and Selinder (2008), they investigated aspects of SLA, and their study tried to find out the reason why only some learners are likely to achieve native-like proficiency in more than one language. Although many SLA authors have put much attention to the SLA, more studies have been going on with the fact that new genres of language learning and teaching have appeared together with the international integration.

2.2 Language learning strategies

The definitions of LLSs in L2 or foreign languages has not come to a common agreement even though the studies of LLSs dates back to 1970s, remarkably by Rubin (1975). He defines that LLSs are the devices or techniques that are necessary for ESL/EFL learners to use to acquire knowledge (Rubin, 1975, p.43). From this point onward, more studies on LLSs have been carried out with different viewpoints namely, Stern (1975), Hosenfeld (1976), Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978), Cohen and Apeh (1980), Bialystok (1981). Noticeably, O’Malley and Charnot (1990) defined the LLSs as the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn to retain new information. In the same year and some years later, Oxford (1990, 1993, 1993) came up with his viewpoints which have been popularly cited until now in the research of LLSs as follows:

... language learning strategies - specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in the 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.

(Oxford, 1992/1993, p. 18).

In comparison with Oxford's opinions, O' Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 1) consider LLSs as the special thought or behavior whereas Oxford (1990) viewed LLSs as steps that learners use to enhance their own learning. Some years later, Chamot (2005, p. 112) stated that strategies are most often conscious and goal-driven especially in the beginning stages of tackling an unfamiliar language task. Some researchers proposed to replace the term "strategy" to "self-regulation" such authors as Dornyei and Skehan (2003), Tseng, Dornyei, and Schmitt (2006), Gao (2007), ... To defend their viewpoints, Tseng, Dornyei, and Schmitt (2006) propose a "conceptual approach highlights the importance of the learners' innate self-regulatory capacity" (p. 79). Besides, Gao (2006) came up with a study entitled "Has language learning strategies research come to an end?" (pp. 615-620) in which he concludes that learners' strategy complemented well the potential advance of self-regulation in language learning research.

The replacement of these terms, however, has not been supported by many researchers. It has been reflected in renewed conferences, workshops, and publications on the strategy subject. Remarkably, Cohen and Macaro (2007), Griffiths (2008, 2013), Oxford (2011), Rose (2012), Oxford and Macaro (2014), Dornyei and Ryan (2015) and ongoing authors have contributed their opinions on the disagreement of the two terms shifted. Take some authors' viewpoints for example. Rose (2012) argues that "movements towards self-regulation are not incompatible with language learning strategies" (p. 92). Griffiths (2013) put it "the slippery strategy concept hangs on tenaciously and refuses to be so easily dismissed" (p. 6). More recently, Dornyei & Royan (2015) confirm that "neither self-regulation nor learning strategy has to become a casualty of the controversy, caught in the cross-fire of the various arguments" (p. 169).

2.3 Learning Styles

Learning style is also substituted by other names as cognitive style or cognitive strategy (Richards and Schmidt, 2010). Learning styles are the general approaches – for instance, visual, analytic, auditory or global – which learners apply in acquiring a L2 language or in any other subject (Oxford, 2003). Dunn & Griggs (1988) state that "Learning style is the biologically and developmentally imposed set of characteristics that make the same teaching method wonderful for some and terrible for others" (p. 3). According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), several different learning styles are often referred to

1. Analytic versus global refers to whether the learner focuses on the details or concentrates on the main idea or big picture.
2. Visual versus auditory versus hands-on or tactile refers to different sensory preferences in learning.
3. Intuitive/random versus concrete/sequential learning refers to a difference between thinking in an abstract or nonsequential way versus a focus on concrete facts or a preference to approach learning in a step by step, organized fashion. (p. 331).

Although there are many style aspects to be influential to L2 learning, Ehrman and Oxford (1990) mentioned 9 major dimensions. Of which 4 strong associations with L2 language are discussed in this study, namely sensory preferences, personality types, desired degree of generality, and biological differences.

2.4 Research studies on the relationship between language learning strategy and language proficiency

Kitakawa (2008) investigated the patterns of strategy used by Japanese university learners of English. He concluded that the more frequent use of LLSs learners employ, the higher proficiency they get. However, Chamot (2005) did a research on language learning strategy invention studies, the author had different viewpoints by claiming that strategy instruction decided the development of learner mastery and autonomy, and increases teacher expertise. Astonishingly, in the same year, Deanna, Evie, and Alan (2005) carried out their research on LLSs and English proficiency of Chinese students by comparing between Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and an institutional version (ITP) of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Their findings revealed that there is no significant differences between males and females on eight measures of learning strategy preferences and language proficiency.

Very recently, Shyr, Feng, Zeng, Hsieh, and Shih (2017) investigated the relationships between LLSs and achievement goal orientations in Taiwanese engineering students taking an EFL class. The findings revealed that there is a significant correlation between LLSs and achievement goal orientations. The study highlighted the results that the influence of the LLSs on the learners are not equal to all instruments (SILL) in their study.

Method

3.1 Design of the study

This study was explored through quantitative research methodology. It was designed to investigate which English learning strategies were frequently used by 124 Hanoi University of Business and Technology (HUBT) first year students and examined whether there was a difference between students' English learning strategy use and their language proficiency. This research combined two types of research design, *survey design* and *correlational design* together (Creswell, 2005). The survey design allows finding out which English language learning strategies has been used most popularly and less popularly by the first year HUBT EFL students. Besides, the correlational design analyzes the differences in the use of English language strategies by multi-level students at HUBT.

3.2 Research Instrument

According to Dörnyei (2010), the main attraction of questionnaires is their unprecedented efficiency in terms of researcher time, researcher effort, and financial resources. Using questionnaires for students in the current survey, the researcher aimed to elicit the frequency of the students' self-reported strategy use by allowing them to show their own judgment. In this study, a probability sampling method was chosen for selecting respondents. 124 respondents were shortlisted. After collecting the data, the next step was to analyze the data using IBM SPSS software to deal with the raw data, basing on the questionnaire and rating score of EFL learners, the researchers explained the more and less popular choices of English language learning strategies used by the first year HUBT students.

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 The background of the respondents involving the survey.

The table 4.1 shows the sample population of the respondents between male and female EFL freshmen. From the table, it reveals that 52.4% of male respondents compared with 47.6% female ones seems to be acceptable figures. The relatively equal distribution based on genders can lead to high reliability, which contributes to the better significance for the later of the study.

Table 4.1: *Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	65	52.4	52.4	52.4
	Female	59	47.6	47.6	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

There are 4 levels involved in the years of respondents learning English. The table 4.2 states that all respondents have spent a long time studying English. Particularly, 84.7% respondents have learnt English for 11 to 15 years, only 15.3% respondents have spent longer years studying English – 16 to 20 years, no respondents have acquired English for less than 11 years. This data may denote that EFL freshmen have gone through many LLSs until the time of doing this survey so that they can give more reliable findings.

Table 4.2: *Distribution of Respondents Based on Years of Learning English*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	11 to 15 years	105	84.7	84.7	84.7
	16 to 20 years	19	15.3	15.3	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

In order to investigate the relationship between English Grade Point of First semester of the respondents, the researcher consulted the respondents on 5 levels of Vietnamese Marking Scales. The table 4.3 shows that the majority of the respondents passed their English subject, however, 58.9% of the respondents got the average scale as shown in the table, following that 25% for good level, 10.5% for above good level, and small number 5.6% for excellent level. These figures depict the reverse fact that the respondents have spent many years of learning English, but their results are not persuasive or otherwise very disappointed.

Table 4.3: *Distribution of Respondents Based on English Grade Point of First Semester*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	From 5.0 to 6.9 grades (average)	73	58.9	58.9	58.9
	From 7.0 to 7.9 grades (good)	31	25.0	25.0	83.9
	From 8.0 to 8.9 grades (above good)	13	10.5	10.5	94.4
	From 9.0 to 10 grades (excellent)	7	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

Concerning with the poor results of English Grade Point, the table 4.4 investigated whether the respondents studied other foreign languages affected English subject. The finding pointed out that

91.9% of the respondents studied English, only 8.1% studied other languages. These figures denote that the number of studying other foreign languages rather than English may not have an effect on the poor results of the respondents in terms of LLSs.

Table 4.4: *Distribution of Respondents Based on Studying Other Languages*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	8.1	8.1	8.1
	No	114	91.9	91.9	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	100.0	

4.2 Language Strategy Use Inventory

4.2.1 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of Listening Strategy Use

The figures in table 4.5 show that all values of the Listening Strategy Use are proved to be internally consistent and could be accepted to participate into the factor analysis test because they satisfy the three requirements proposed by the Cronbach's alpha reliability test as follows:

First of all, α is 0.982 (excellent) which is higher than the acceptable value 0.7

Secondly, all Corrected Item-Total Correlation values are higher than the standard of 0.3

Finally, it is worth noticing that all Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted of 26 items do not exceed more than the α of 0.982.

Table 4.5: *Reliability Test of Listening Strategy Use*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Listening Strategy Use Q1	57.31	338.621	.657	.982
Listening Strategy Use Q2	57.35	336.215	.731	.982
Listening Strategy Use Q3	57.40	337.428	.751	.982
Listening Strategy Use Q4	57.44	335.420	.776	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q5	57.34	333.852	.811	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q6	57.38	334.188	.791	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q7	57.35	334.149	.796	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q8	57.29	335.460	.746	.982
Listening Strategy Use Q9	57.44	328.460	.898	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q10	57.43	330.767	.902	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q11	57.49	330.626	.909	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q12	57.45	331.046	.891	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q13	57.46	334.332	.816	.981

Listening Strategy Use Q14	57.46	332.511	.875	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q15	57.40	332.795	.815	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q16	57.46	331.405	.911	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q17	57.43	333.661	.857	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q18	57.42	334.099	.794	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q19	57.42	336.343	.784	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q20	57.40	335.038	.776	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q21	57.39	334.922	.834	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q22	57.37	332.609	.857	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q23	57.35	334.814	.818	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q24	57.30	334.113	.806	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q25	57.34	332.421	.866	.981
Listening Strategy Use Q26	57.27	341.957	.711	.982

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient = 0.982

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of Vocabulary Strategy Use

The same analysis as Listening Strategy Use is shown in the table 4.6. Generally, the values met the three requirements proposed by the Cronbach's alpha reliability test. The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient is 0.789 which seems to be acceptable for the consideration.

Table 4.6: *Reliability Test of Vocabulary Strategy Use*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q27	42.60	25.755	.437	.774
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q28	42.76	27.453	.393	.779
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q29	42.65	26.166	.374	.779
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q30	42.81	27.783	.328	.782
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q31	42.64	26.461	.306	.785

Vocabulary Strategy Use Q32	42.73	25.270	.528	.767
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q33	42.98	27.585	.275	.785
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q34	42.88	28.237	.200	.789
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q35	43.04	26.348	.463	.773
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q36	43.10	27.444	.270	.786
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q37	42.97	27.625	.245	.787
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q38	43.02	27.105	.357	.780
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q39	42.97	26.617	.402	.777
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q40	43.09	26.651	.400	.777
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q41	43.09	26.699	.439	.775
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q42	42.94	26.753	.361	.780
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q43	43.12	25.928	.457	.772
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q44	43.03	26.812	.386	.778

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient = 0.789

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of Speaking Strategy Use

Eighteen items of the Speaking Strategy Use shown in the table 4.7 satisfy the three requirements proposed by the Cronbach's alpha reliability test. In terms of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, the α is 0.941, which is the highest value that secures the reliability of the findings.

Table 4.7: *Reliability Test of Speaking Strategy Use*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Speaking Strategy Use Q45	38.94	103.671	.745	.937
Speaking Strategy Use Q46	38.94	104.883	.663	.938
Speaking Strategy Use Q47	39.06	106.411	.596	.939
Speaking Strategy Use Q48	39.05	105.461	.701	.938
Speaking Strategy Use Q49	38.86	103.648	.739	.937

Speaking Strategy Use Q50	39.02	105.626	.709	.937
Speaking Strategy Use Q51	38.89	106.296	.606	.939
Speaking Strategy Use Q52	38.91	105.561	.623	.939
Speaking Strategy Use Q53	38.93	106.230	.637	.939
Speaking Strategy Use Q54	38.97	104.162	.664	.938
Speaking Strategy Use Q55	38.98	106.674	.643	.939
Speaking Strategy Use Q56	38.86	106.282	.638	.939
Speaking Strategy Use Q57	38.82	102.245	.696	.938
Speaking Strategy Use Q58	38.87	103.414	.711	.937
Speaking Strategy Use Q59	38.75	103.896	.622	.939
Speaking Strategy Use Q60	38.77	103.038	.670	.938
Speaking Strategy Use Q61	38.81	106.190	.592	.940
Speaking Strategy Use Q62	39.01	102.463	.759	.936

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient = 0.941

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of Reading Strategy Use

The test results from the table 4.8 show that all the requirements for testing the reliability of the findings are satisfied. The α is 0.952, which is also highly appreciated for the research findings. From the findings in the table 4.8, it can be concluded that all values of the Reading Strategy Use are shown internal consistence and these values could be accepted to participate into the factor analysis test.

Table 4.8: *Reliability Test of Reading Strategy Use*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Reading Strategy Use Q63	25.44	65.175	.667	.951
Reading Strategy Use Q64	25.48	64.626	.735	.949
Reading Strategy Use Q65	25.42	64.961	.673	.951
Reading Strategy Use Q66	25.47	64.218	.728	.949
Reading Strategy Use Q67	25.51	64.415	.777	.948
Reading Strategy Use Q68	25.56	63.745	.785	.947
Reading Strategy Use Q69	25.45	63.209	.810	.947

Reading Strategy Use Q70	25.49	63.764	.758	.948
Reading Strategy Use Q71	25.47	63.666	.769	.948
Reading Strategy Use Q72	25.40	63.771	.752	.948
Reading Strategy Use Q73	25.56	61.013	.890	.944
Reading Strategy Use Q74	25.54	62.169	.882	.944

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient = 0.952

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of Writing Strategy Use

Looking at the table 4.9, it can be seen that all the values are worth taking for consideration for the reliability test of writing strategy use. The high value of α , 0.964, states that this figure is satisfactory for the analysis compared with 0.7 suggested in statistics.

Table 4.9: *Reliability Test of Writing Strategy Use*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Writing Strategy Use Q75	20.27	47.176	.893	.958
Writing Strategy Use Q76	20.23	47.286	.879	.959
Writing Strategy Use Q77	20.24	48.543	.799	.962
Writing Strategy Use Q78	20.24	47.762	.870	.959
Writing Strategy Use Q79	20.19	47.795	.811	.962
Writing Strategy Use Q80	20.24	47.291	.913	.958
Writing Strategy Use Q81	20.21	48.200	.850	.960
Writing Strategy Use Q82	20.20	48.179	.800	.962
Writing Strategy Use Q83	20.20	49.187	.777	.963
Writing Strategy Use Q84	20.18	48.505	.783	.962

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient = 0.964

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of Translation Strategy Use

The last thing mention here is the table 4.10 which shows the finding results of the Reliability Test of Translation Strategy Use. The same situation like the other test results in this study comes up with the internal consistence of the values of the test. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (0.936) denotes that this figure is the highest value recommendation.

Table 4.10: *Reliability Test of Translation Strategy Use*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Translation Strategy Use Q85	11.80	13.691	.824	.922
Translation Strategy Use Q86	11.78	13.261	.842	.920
Translation Strategy Use Q87	11.76	13.583	.822	.922
Translation Strategy Use Q88	11.71	13.460	.802	.925
Translation Strategy Use Q89	11.75	13.197	.858	.917
Translation Strategy Use Q90	11.69	15.047	.714	.935

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient = 0.936

4.2.2 Factor Analysis Test

Factor analysis is a method of data reduction which does this by seeking underlying unobservable (latent) variables that are reflected in the observed variables (manifest variables). Results from these tables have indicated that all factors in the findings are proved to be necessary to explain the impacts that English LLS are meaningful to be considered for analysis because the figures satisfy the four requirements of the test as follows:

- (1) KMO value is between 0.5 and 1.0
- (2) Barlett Sig. is 0.000 which is lower than 5%, this mean that the figures are relevant to the analysis.
- (3) The cumulative eigenvalues are all higher than 50%
- (4) Factor loading values are all higher than 0.30

Table 4.11: *Factor Analysis Test of Listening Strategy Use Factor*

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.968
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3493.934
	df	325
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	17.990	69.191	69.191	17.990	69.191	69.191
2	.805	3.098	72.289			
3	.718	2.761	75.050			
4	.600	2.307	77.357			

5	.569	2.188	79.544		
6	.538	2.068	81.612		
7	.463	1.780	83.392		
8	.428	1.647	85.039		
9	.397	1.528	86.567		
10	.373	1.436	88.003		
11	.356	1.368	89.370		
12	.314	1.209	90.580		
13	.287	1.103	91.683		
14	.273	1.050	92.733		
15	.254	.976	93.708		
16	.241	.927	94.636		
17	.237	.912	95.547		
18	.200	.768	96.315		
19	.186	.715	97.030		
20	.167	.641	97.671		
21	.127	.487	98.158		
22	.114	.437	98.594		
23	.106	.407	99.002		
24	.095	.367	99.368		
25	.089	.342	99.711		
26	.075	.289	100.000		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Listening Strategy Use Q1	.677
Listening Strategy Use Q2	.751
Listening Strategy Use Q3	.768
Listening Strategy Use Q4	.792
Listening Strategy Use Q5	.826
Listening Strategy Use Q6	.809
Listening Strategy Use Q7	.812
Listening Strategy Use Q8	.764
Listening Strategy Use Q9	.907
Listening Strategy Use Q10	.912
Listening Strategy Use Q11	.917
Listening Strategy Use Q12	.901
Listening Strategy Use Q13	.832
Listening Strategy Use Q14	.886
Listening Strategy Use Q15	.830
Listening Strategy Use Q16	.921
Listening Strategy Use Q17	.871
Listening Strategy Use Q18	.811
Listening Strategy Use Q19	.801

Listening Strategy Use Q20	.794
Listening Strategy Use Q21	.848
Listening Strategy Use Q22	.871
Listening Strategy Use Q23	.835
Listening Strategy Use Q24	.823
Listening Strategy Use Q25	.880
Listening Strategy Use Q26	.730

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.^a

a. 1 components extracted.

Table 4.12: Factor Analysis Test of Vocabulary Strategy Use Factor

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.753	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	723.178
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.069	22.606	22.606	4.069	22.606	22.606
2	3.061	17.005	39.611			
3	1.514	8.414	48.025			
4	1.360	7.558	55.583			
5	1.060	5.891	61.474			
6	.915	5.084	66.558			
7	.883	4.905	71.464			
8	.789	4.384	75.848			
9	.704	3.910	79.758			
10	.598	3.325	83.083			
11	.573	3.181	86.264			
12	.478	2.658	88.922			
13	.448	2.490	91.411			
14	.409	2.270	93.681			
15	.360	1.998	95.679			
16	.344	1.913	97.592			
17	.275	1.527	99.119			
18	.159	.881	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

		Component
		1
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q27		.458
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q28		.440

Vocabulary Strategy Use Q29	.388
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q30	.388
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q31	.328
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q32	.589
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q33	.359
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q34	.269
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q35	.615
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q36	.398
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q37	.377
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q38	.508
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q39	.531
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q40	.524
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q41	.570
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q42	.473
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q43	.627
Vocabulary Strategy Use Q44	.522

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.^a

a. 1 components extracted.

Table 4.13: *Factor Analysis Test of Speaking Strategy Use Factor*

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.927
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1265.270
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	
1	9.103	50.575	50.575	9.103	50.575	50.575	
2	1.088	6.042	56.617				
3	.877	4.871	61.488				
4	.822	4.565	66.053				
5	.788	4.380	70.433				
6	.743	4.130	74.564				
7	.616	3.420	77.984				
8	.549	3.049	81.033				
9	.540	3.000	84.033				
10	.454	2.521	86.554				
11	.417	2.314	88.868				
12	.393	2.183	91.051				
13	.351	1.948	92.998				
14	.308	1.710	94.709				
15	.293	1.630	96.339				

16	.249	1.382	97.720		
17	.225	1.249	98.969		
18	.186	1.031	100.000		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

Component
1

Speaking Strategy Use Q45	.783
Speaking Strategy Use Q46	.709
Speaking Strategy Use Q47	.640
Speaking Strategy Use Q48	.746
Speaking Strategy Use Q49	.775
Speaking Strategy Use Q50	.751
Speaking Strategy Use Q51	.651
Speaking Strategy Use Q52	.670
Speaking Strategy Use Q53	.687
Speaking Strategy Use Q54	.709
Speaking Strategy Use Q55	.687
Speaking Strategy Use Q56	.687
Speaking Strategy Use Q57	.732
Speaking Strategy Use Q58	.747
Speaking Strategy Use Q59	.662
Speaking Strategy Use Q60	.709
Speaking Strategy Use Q61	.632
Speaking Strategy Use Q62	.794

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.^a

a. 1 components extracted.

Table 4.14: *Factor Analysis Test of Reading Strategy Use Factor*

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.928
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1209.479
	df	66
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.888	65.733	65.733	7.888	65.733	65.733
2	.762	6.352	72.085			
3	.581	4.839	76.925			
4	.502	4.184	81.108			
5	.464	3.867	84.975			
6	.407	3.388	88.363			
7	.350	2.918	91.282			
8	.305	2.544	93.825			

9	.268	2.231	96.056		
10	.186	1.547	97.603		
11	.160	1.332	98.936		
12	.128	1.064	100.000		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Reading Strategy Use Q63	.715
Reading Strategy Use Q64	.782
Reading Strategy Use Q65	.721
Reading Strategy Use Q66	.774
Reading Strategy Use Q67	.816
Reading Strategy Use Q68	.822
Reading Strategy Use Q69	.846
Reading Strategy Use Q70	.801
Reading Strategy Use Q71	.810
Reading Strategy Use Q72	.796
Reading Strategy Use Q73	.913
Reading Strategy Use Q74	.907

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.^a

Table 4.15: Factor Analysis Test of Writing Strategy Use Factor

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.957
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1274.736
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.585	75.847	75.847	7.585	75.847	75.847
2	.440	4.397	80.244			
3	.411	4.108	84.352			
4	.346	3.460	87.812			
5	.316	3.157	90.969			
6	.297	2.967	93.936			
7	.186	1.856	95.793			
8	.169	1.691	97.483			
9	.135	1.353	98.837			
10	.116	1.163	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Writing Strategy Use Q75	.917
Writing Strategy Use Q76	.906
Writing Strategy Use Q77	.837
Writing Strategy Use Q78	.897
Writing Strategy Use Q79	.848
Writing Strategy Use Q80	.933
Writing Strategy Use Q81	.882
Writing Strategy Use Q82	.838
Writing Strategy Use Q83	.819
Writing Strategy Use Q84	.823

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.^a

a. 1 components extracted.

Table 4.16: *Factor Analysis Test of Translation Strategy Use Factor*

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.914
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	593.687
	df	15
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.546	75.773	75.773	4.546	75.773	75.773
2	.437	7.279	83.052			
3	.338	5.631	88.683			
4	.295	4.920	93.603			
5	.219	3.646	97.249			
6	.165	2.751	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
Translation Strategy Use Q85	.881
Translation Strategy Use Q86	.894
Translation Strategy Use Q87	.879
Translation Strategy Use Q88	.864
Translation Strategy Use Q89	.905
Translation Strategy Use Q90	.794

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.^a

a. 1 components extracted.

4.2.3 Comparison between Gender and Language Learning Strategies

The table 4.17 reveals the test results about the difference between gender and 6 factors. From the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, it is concluded that there is a difference between male or female EFL first year students in using LLS for vocabulary as Sig. (0.29). However, when considering the t-test equality of means, the findings shows that there is no difference between male and female EFL freshmen as Sig. (0.201>0.05). Except for the Vocabulary Language Strategy, other language strategies such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Translation show the internal consistence between Levene's Test for Equality of Variances and t-test for Equality of Means. It means that there are no differences between male or female EFL first year students in choosing language learning strategies. This finding is the same as the study carried by Deanna, Evie, and Alan (2005).

Table 4.17 Comparison between Gender and Language Learning Strategies

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Listening	Equal variances assumed	.191	.663	-1.479	122	.142
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.486	122.000	.140
Vocabulary	Equal variances assumed	4.889	.029	-1.267	122	.208
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.286	116.969	.201
Speaking	Equal variances assumed	.096	.757	-.848	122	.398
	Equal variances not assumed			-.850	121.570	.397
Reading	Equal variances assumed	.058	.810	-1.411	122	.161
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.414	121.710	.160
Writing	Equal variances assumed	.164	.686	-1.444	122	.151
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.450	121.993	.150
Translation	Equal variances assumed	2.268	.135	-1.695	122	.093

Equal variances not assumed		-1.711	120.856	.090
--------------------------------	--	--------	---------	------

4.2.4 English Grade Point First Semester and Language Learning Strategies

The table 4.18 reveals the relationship between the English Grade Point First Semester and LLS. The analysis shows that only Vocabulary Language Strategy is not affected the results of EFL freshmen's semester school report. The other language strategies highly influence the results of the first semester, which is similar in the other studies by Kitakawa (2008), Shyr, Feng, Zeng, Hsieh, and Shih (2017).

Table 4.18: Comparison between English Grade Point First Semester and Language Learning Strategies

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Listening	Between Groups	5.598	3	1.866	3.725	.013
	Within Groups	60.110	120	.501		
	Total	65.708	123			
Vocabulary	Between Groups	.472	3	.157	1.750	.161
	Within Groups	10.801	120	.090		
	Total	11.273	123			
Speaking	Between Groups	3.457	3	1.152	3.373	.021
	Within Groups	40.988	120	.342		
	Total	44.444	123			
Reading	Between Groups	5.814	3	1.938	3.963	.010
	Within Groups	58.686	120	.489		
	Total	64.500	123			
Writing	Between Groups	6.211	3	2.070	3.743	.013
	Within Groups	66.377	120	.553		
	Total	72.589	123			
Translation	Between Groups	4.382	3	1.461	2.818	.042
	Within Groups	62.197	120	.518		
	Total	66.579	123			

5 Conclusions

The findings of the current study reflected the real situation of English language learning strategies applied by the first year HUBT students. As a result, the results could make known to the teachers about their students' English leaning strategy preference, produce an effective plan for strategy training in their English teaching class. The findings would raise the students' awareness about LLS, promote them to construct and adjust their language strategies, and sketch out the suitable activities for applying English learning strategies.

From the result of the study, it is advisable for both the teachers and students to acknowledge the students' strategy preference in order to determine the students' strengths and weaknesses in English learning. The teachers cooperate with their students to decide which LLSs are best for their students to improve and how their students could master the LLSs. Besides, using the best LLSs encourage the students to become more independent and flexible in applying task-appropriate strategies to enhance the effectiveness of their learning.

So as for the students to become aware of the importance of choosing the best LLSs for them, the teachers are advisable to launch many activities for their students involve such as forums, workshop, English competitions or even camping trips to English speaking communities. According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies are considered as teachable. The more LLSs are trained, the more successful the students gain by mastering their learning styles and strategies.

During the class time, the teacher may introduce many practical activities to take explicit and implicit strategy instructions into the regular lessons. It is only the teachers who understand which language learning strategies are suitable for different students. The study shows that both male and female students apply LLSs in their second language acquisition, otherwise, their first semester school report or particularly English Grade Point is firmly related to their learning styles and language strategies. The teachers' tasks are to encourage them to develop the relevant LLSs and adjust the factors or strategies they have not done well.

It is noticeable that students' background plays an important role for the teachers to get to know before expecting to introduce the instructions in the target language. The teachers are advisable to know clearly about their students' learning styles, learning goals or perception to the target language. Generally speaking, the success of LLSs are trained under the cooperation between the teachers and the students.

About the Authors

First Author: Bui Thi Kieu Giang, PhD is a qualified teacher at Center for Foreign Languages and Applied Informatics – Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry – Thai Nguyen University, Thai Nguyen City, Vietnam. She has published many researches regarding the English Language Teaching Methodology. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2743-4055>

Second Author: Vu Van Tuan, PhD is a teacher at English Faculty B1 - Hanoi University of Business and Technology, Hanoi City, Vietnam. Until now he has had many papers researching English Language Teaching. He is trying to put himself forward with many studies in the near future. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3066-7338>

References

- Benjamin, E. S. (2017). Most Popular Languages In The World. Retrieved April, 25th 2017 from <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/most-popular-languages-in-the-world.html>
- Bialystok, E. (1981). The role of conscious strategies in second language proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal*, 65, 24-35.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2005). Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research. *Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education*.

- Cohen, A. & Aphek, E. (1980). Retention of second language vocabulary over time: Investigating the role of mnemonic associations. *System*, 8, 221-235.
- Chamot, A. U. (2005). The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA): An update. In P.A.
- Cohen, A. & Macaro, E. (2007). *Learner strategies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Deanna L. N, Evie R. T, and Alan A. (2005). Language Learning Strategies and English Proficiency of Chinese University Students. Retrieved Spring 2005 from http://web.pdx.edu/~fischerw/courses/advanced/methods_docs/pdf_doc/wbf_collection/0351_0400/0399_FLA_2005_Strategies_China_Nisbet.pdf
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. New York: Routledge.
- Dörnyei Z. & P. Skehan, (2003). *Individual differences in second language learning*. In Doughty and M. Long (eds.), *The handbook of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Dunn, R. & Griggs S. A. (1988). *Learning Style: Quiet Revolution in American Secondary Schools*. Reston, Va.: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Grass, S. & Selinker, L. (2008). *Second language acquisition: an introductory course* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum. Retrieved November 12, 2011 from <http://books.google.com>
- Gao, X. (2006). Has language learning strategy research come to an end? A response to Tseng, Dörnyei and Schmitt. *Applied Linguistics* 28(4), 615-620.
- Griffiths, C. (2008). *Strategies and good language learners*. In C. Griffiths (Ed.), *Lessons from good language learners* (pp. 83-98). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Griffiths, C. (2013). The strategy factor in successful language learning. *Bristol: Multilingual Matters*.
- Hosenfeld, C. (1976). Learning about learning: Discovering our students' strategies. *Foreign Language Annals*, 9, 117-129.
- Kato, S. (2005). How language learning strategies affect English proficiency in Japanese university students. *Journal of the faculty of Human Studies, Bankyo Gakuin University*, 7(1).
- Kitakawa, A. (2008). An Experimental Study of Language Learning Strategies: Particular Focus on the Patterns of Strategy Use by Japanese University Learners of English. *Iwate University Repository: Bulletin of Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 17, 149-169.
- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Lee, J. Heinz, M. (2016) English Language Learning Strategies Reported By Advanced Language Learners. Retrieved 2nd quarter 2016 from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1096670.pdf>.
- Moeller; Aleidine K. & Catalano; Eresa. (2015). Foreign Language Teaching and Learning. Faculty Publications: Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education. 200. Retrieved June 05th, 2015 from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/teachlearnfacpub/200>
- Naiman, N; Frohlich, M.; Stern, H., & Todesco, A. (1978). The good language learner. *Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education*.
- Noam C. (2006). *Language and mind* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- O'Malley, J.M. & A.U. Chamot. (1990). *Learning strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Oxford, R. (1990a). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. New York: Newbury House.
- Oxford, R. (1990b). Styles, strategies, and aptitude: Connections for language learning. In T.S. Parry & C.W. Stansfield (Eds.), *Language Aptitude Reconsidered* (pp. 67-125). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Oxford, R. (1992/1993). Language learning strategies in a nutshell: *Update and ESL suggestions*. *TESOL Journal*, 2(2), 18-22.
- Oxford, R. L. (2002). Language learning strategies in a Nutshell: Update and ESL Suggestions. In: Richards, T.C & Renandya, W.A (eds.), *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice* (pp.124-132). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved December 14, 2011 from <http://books.google.com>
- Oxford, R.L., (2003). Language Learning Strategies: An overview. GALA. Retrieved from <http://web.ntpu.edu.tw/~language/workshop/read2.pdf>
- Oxford, R. (2011). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.
- Oxford, R., & Griffiths, C. (Eds.). (2014). Language learning strategy research in the twenty-first century: *Insights and innovations [Special issue]*. *System*, 43.
- Richards, J., & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (4th ed.). Harlow: Longman.
- Richard-Amato & M.A. Snow (Eds.), *Academic success for English language learners: Strategies for K-12 mainstream teachers* (pp. 87-101). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Rose, H. (2012). Reconceptualizing strategic learning in the face of self-regulation: Throwing language learning strategies out with the bathwater. *Applied Linguistics*, 33, 92-98.
- Rod E. (2003). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford University Press.
- Rubin, J. (1975). What the “good language learner” can teach us. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9, 41-51.
- Stern, H. (1975). What can we learn from the good language learner? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 34, 304-318.
- Tseng, W. T., Dörnyei, Z., & Schmitt, N. (2006). A new approach to assessing strategic learning: The case of self-regulation in vocabulary acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 27(1), 78-102.
- Wen-Jye S.; Hung-Yun F.; Li-Wen Z.; Ying-Ming H.; Chia-Yu S. (2017). The Relationship between Language Learning Strategies and Achievement Goal Orientations from Taiwanese Engineering Students in EFL Learning. Retrieved 24 August 2017 from <http://www.ejmste.com/The-Relationship-between-Language-Learning-Strategies-and-Achievement-Goal-Orientations,76660,0,2.html#references>