

## LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS

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### Abstract

In mastering English, students of English Department need to use language learning strategies while they also should pay attention to their academic achievement. As language learning strategies are relevant to the students' effort to achieve the high-grade academic achievement, this study aims to determine the relationship between language learning strategies use and the students' academic achievement indicated by grade point average (GPA). The method used in this research is quantitative research, employing documentation and questionnaires. The sample in this study were 38 students of English Department at one of private universities in Indonesia. From the result of this study, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between the language learning strategies use and students' academic achievement. The pedagogical implications are related to the suggestion for English teachers to introduce and train the English Department students to use language learning strategies to improve their academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Language learning strategies, GPA, academic achievement, correlation, English department

### Introduction

For most English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students especially at tertiary level mastering English skills has been the most important thing to master as it is related to their core competencies. Students have to be aware of these competencies including listening, speaking, reading and writing to succeed in their study. However, mastering English is not an easy task to master by students including students whose major is English (Annury, 2013; Ambarwati and Mandasari, 2020; Aminatun and Oktaviani, 2019; Ayu, 2020; Mandasari, 2020; Mandasari and Aminatun, 2020; Oktaviana and Mandasari, 2020; Pustika, 2020; Mandasari and Wahyudin, 2021, Rahmania, A. H., & Mandasari, B., 2021). For example, English Department students commonly assume speaking is the most difficult skill since it needs great courage as well as preparation to speak well in the front of public. They are not only required to master English but also showing good commands of teaching English. Thus, the process of learning the language may support the students' academic achievement as well.

In this case, the learning process is closely related to learning strategies where the achievement of a learning goal is strongly influenced by a process called learning strategy. According to Griffiths (2015), language learning strategy can be not only an activity but also a behavior that learners acquire, maintain, or change in language learning. When behavior becomes conscious, it will probably work in a similar way as those activities that are deliberately selected; for instance, being persistent, or responsible during learning. It is line

with research conducted by Ayu (2018) that learning strategies can help learners to comprehend materials given by teacher if they apply it consistently during learning process. Additionally, Oxford (1990) states that learning strategies make language learning: “easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations”. That is, learners choose procedures to learn based on the easiness to perform the activity and the enjoyment they find in the activity, which eventually will aid their motivation and endurance in language learning (Sari, 2020). Moreover, learning strategies used by students can affect their achievement in learning English because it is repeatedly implemented by them (Ayu, Diem, & Vianty, 2017; Mandasari & Oktaviani, 2018; Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020).

According to Anderson (2003), the relationship between learning styles and students' competency level is obvious. Students will be more proficient if they use a greater range and quantity of learning strategies. Similarly, according to Hismanoglu (2000), a language learner who is capable of employing a variety of language learning strategies effectively can increase his language skills. Based on the discussion of the significance of learning strategies in increasing students' speaking skills, an important determining issue may arise in our minds. According to Chamot (2004), learning strategy plays an essential part in the effectiveness of assisting less successful students in improving their speaking skills. Students' speaking skill can be improved by providing interactive activities during teaching and process by giving them project-based assignment, so they can collaborate with other students and share their ideas each other (Yuliansyah & Ayu, 2021; Apriyanti & Ayu, 2020).

In English Department, students do not only experience process of learning language but also learning contents such as pedagogy, math, religion, civics, business, etc. This process may run simultaneously as the students use language learning strategies to learn a language. The success of their studies is demonstrated by an achievement of Grade Point Average or often referred as GPA. The attainment of GPA may reflect the process done by the students during study. If the GPA obtained is good, then the process that the student goes through can be said to be in the good category. On the contrary, if the GPA obtained by the student is low, the process that the student goes through can be said to be unfavorable or unsupportive.

At the level of achievement of learning success itself can be influenced by several factors, namely: Health, intelligence, talents, interests, learning styles (Wahyudin and Rido, 2020), learning strategies, and motivation. In this study, researchers will only focus on learning strategies, since research on language learning strategies and academic achievement in Indonesian context has not been much discussed. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can be used as a reference for further research concerned with the exploration of language learning strategies use.

In general, language learning strategies and academic achievement have a good attachment or a positive relationship, the results of several studies by Dewson and McInerney (2004) stated that the way students develop and align their various strategies and goals is closely related to their academic results. In addition, Diseth et al. (2010) suggests that in general academic achievement has a positive relationship with deep learning strategies and negative with surface learning strategies.

Learning strategies can be classified into two major groups, there are cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Dewson and McInerney, 2004). There are six categories of language learning strategies concerned in this study. They are social strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, and memory strategies

(Oxford, 1990). According to Lestari and Wahyudin (2020) students tend to use more metacognitive strategies than any other strategies, with overall medium use of language learning strategies. This may indicate that the use of language learning strategies is important factor to the students' learning process.

### Method

This research was conducted with 38 participants from English Department students at one of universities in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The data collection was done through document analysis and questionnaire form distribution. The document analysis is used to gain the evident of the students' academic achievement. The data of students' achievement is collected from the students' academic transcript. Then, before administering questionnaire, the researcher first conducted a reliability test using SPSS for windows version 26 with the results in the following table.

**Table1. Reliability Statistic of Questionnaire**

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,965	47

Table 1 shows the reliability statistics of questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha 0,965 which means highly reliable. There are 47 questions with 6 categories of learning strategies there are: Social Strategies, Metacognitive Strategies, Affective Strategies, Cognitive Strategies Compensation Strategies, and Memory Strategies. The questionnaire used likert scale, in the range of *Strongly Agree (SA)*, *Agree (A)*, *Natural (N)*, *Disagree (D)*, *Strongly Disagree (SD)* where each item has a value ranging from 5 to 1.

**Table 2. Likert scale ranges**

Statement	Point
Strong Agree	5
Agree	4
Natural	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

The higher the score selected on this scale indicates that the subject uses more or a lot of language learning strategies, while the lower the score indicates the subject uses less learning strategies. The statements given are 47 items with 6 categories described as follows.

**Table 3. Classification of learning Strategies Questionnaire**

Category of Learning Strategies	Number of items
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Social Strategies	1,2,3,4,5,6
Metacognitive Strategies.	7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15
Affective Strategies	16,17,18,19,20,21
Cognitive Strategies	22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32
Compensation Strategis	33,34,35,36,37
Memory Strategies	38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46,47

To analyze the data of students' language learning strategies, the scale method is used. The scale method was chosen because the students respond the statements that indirectly reveal the attributes of language learning strategies use (Azwar, 2003, 2005). Each question item answered by the respondent will be summed based on the scale on the selected answer, or using the summated rating method (method of summated rating). The whole of the sum of the response values is used as the subject's score on the scale.

The purpose of this study was to find out whether there is a relationship between learning strategies and learning outcomes or learning achievement levels indicated by Grade Point Average. Thus, pearson correlation analysis was used to measure the level of correlation between two variables. The analysis was done with the support of SPSS version 26.

### Findings and Discussion

This study aims to find the relationship between learning strategy and learning achievement, which is seen from the GPA. This research was held at the student level. questions totaled 47 items. The results of the research can be seen in the data and table provided below. Below is the result of the response analysis based on gander.

**Table 4. Characteristic of respondents based on gender**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	12	27,3	31,6	31,6
Female	26	59,1	68,4	100,0
Total	38	86,4	100,0	

This research used was given to students of the university level , especially the Department of English Education for the 2018. Based on the table data that has been presented, it can be seen that the number of respondents is 38 students consisting of 12 male and 26 female with a valid percent of 31.6 and also 68.4 overall, namely 100%. In this study the students' achievement is indicated by grade point average (GPA), the result can be in the following table.

**Table 5. Descriptive Statistic of students' GPA**

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation

GPA	38	2	4	3,46	,502
Valid (listwise)	N 38				

Based on the table, it can be concluded that the highest GPA score was 4 while the lowest GPA is 2. The average GPA of the class is 3.46. As stated earlier, this study aims to find a relationship between the number of learning strategies and student achievement which can be indicated by the GPA score. There are 6 learning strategies that are presented as indicators of how many learning strategies are used by students who have a high GPA. The following is the statement of each learning strategy, the average and the number of respondents, which can then be seen in the table shown below.

**Table 6. The Report of Students' Social Strategies**

No	Statement	N	Mean
Q1.1	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk	38	3,16
Q1.2	I ask for help from English speakers	38	3,26
Q1.3	I try to learn about culture of English speakers	38	3,66
Q1.4	if I don't understand something in English I ask the other person to slow down or say it again	38	3,68
Q1.5	I ask Question in English	38	3,39
Q1.6	I practice English with other students	38	3,47
	Mean		3,43

In the category of Social Strategies, there are six statements with overall mean is 3.43. The highest mean goes to Q1.4 *"if I don't understand something in English I ask the other person to slow down or say it again"* this shows that many students use learning methods, one of which is the use of Social Strategies. The result shows that the students also tend to ask the speaker to slow down his speech so that he can understand every word clearly. But on the contrary, asking English speakers to correct them when they talk, is the least preferences. This is a way of improvising skills by speaking directly to native speakers so that later they feel accustomed to it. Furthermore, students choose to learn about the culture of English speakers indicated by Q1.3. They also learn English by asking questions in English (Q1.5). This can be done both in class and in the environment around practice other students, and it is also can be done with other students (Q1.6).

**Table 7. The Report of Students' Metacognitive Strategies**

No	Statement	N	Mean
Q2.1	I try to find out how to better learner of English	38	3,89
Q2.2	I look for people I can talk to in English	38	3,53

Q2.3	I think about my progress in learning English	38	3,76
Q2.4	I think about my progress in learning English	38	3,71
Q2.5	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better	38	3.84
Q2.6	I pay attention when someone is speaking English	38	3,87
Q2.7	I look opportunities to read as much as possible in English	38	3,58
Q2.8	I have clear goals for improving my English skill	38	3,45
Q2.9	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English	38	3,39
Mean			3,66

There are nine statements indicating metacognitive strategies. The highest mean is in the Q2.1 statement, namely *"I try to find out how to better learner of English"* as many as 3.89. Many students agree on this statement indicating that the students also use this method in their learning. The smallest mean of Metacognitive Strategies is 3.39 in the Q2.9 statement *"I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English"*. This is clearly the lowest mean, and it shows that many students have learning targets, but they do not plan on writing schedule. The total mean of metacognitive strategies is 3.66.

**Table 8. The Report of Students' Affective Strategies**

No.	Statement	N	Mean
Q3.1	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English	38	3,55
Q3.2	I encourage my-self to speak English even I am afraid of making mistake	38	3,71
Q3.3	I gave my-self reward or treat when I do well in English	38	3,58
Q3.4	I notice if I am tense or nervous when i am studying or using English	38	3,32
Q3.5	I write down my feelings in a language learning diary	38	2,71
Q3.6	I talk to someone else about how feel when I am learning English	38	3,21
Mean			3,34

In the category Affective Strategies, six statements were explored with the highest mean in the statement number Q3.2, namely *"I encourage myself to speak English even I am afraid of making mistakes"* while the lowest average is the statement number. Q3.5 *"I write down my feelings in a language learning diary"*. Besides that, in this strategy, students in their

learning try to relax whenever they feel afraid of using English, namely in Q3.1 this shows that they are using this method or strategy, they try their best to enjoy their process, if they feel unsure of themselves. they will realize this as in the Q3.4 statement, after feeling that they are able to achieve their goals, many of them give self-rewards which are one of the characteristics of using this strategy, seen in the Q3.3 statement.

**Table 9. The Report of Students' Cognitive Strategies**

No.	Statement	N	Mean
Q4.1	I try to talk English native speakers	38	3,55
Q4.2	I practice the sounds of English	38	3,55
Q4.3	I use the English words in different ways	38	3,82
Q4.4	I start English conversations in English	38	3,55
Q4.5	I try not to translate word - for – word	38	3,84
Q4.6	I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English	38	4,82
Q4.7	I try to find patterns in English	38	3,71
Q4.8	I say or write new English word several times	38	3,61
Q4.9	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English	38	3,76
Q4.10	I find the meaning an English word by dividing it into parts that i understands	38	3,52
Q4.11	I make some summaries of information that i hear or read in English	38	3,42
Mean			3,74

For the category of cognitive strategies, 11 statements were explored with the total mean 3.74. The highest mean is 4.82, with Q4.6 *"I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English"* while the lowest is statement Q4.11 *"I make some summaries of information that I hear or read in English"*. To support the learning process and progress of students who use this strategy take notes for new things or important things to remember so that they will not be unfamiliar with it again, Besides that, students who use this method also try to speak like native speakers as part of their practice and hone their skills, this can be seen in the Q4.1 and Q4.2 statements *"try to talk English native speakers"* and *"I practice the sounds of English"*, students who use this strategy are not afraid to start a conversation because they believe that it can improve their ability, an independent learning process that is without translating word for word makes users of this strategy feel capable, in the statements Q4.4, Q4.5 namely *"I start English conversations in English"* and users of this strategy usually have high motivation so they search Learning sources from anywhere, whether from electronic media such as TV, making summaries or being able to write, in statements Q4.6, Q4.8, Q4.9, Q4.10. *"I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English"*, *"I say or write new English word several times"*, *"I look*

for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English” and “I find the meaning an English word by dividing it into parts that I understands”.

**Table 10. The Report of Students’ Compensation Strategies**

No	Statement	N	Mean
Q5.1	I make a guess understand unfamiliar English words	38	3,50
Q5.2	I make up new words if i don't know right ones English	38	3,53
Q5.3	If I can't understand an English word, I use a word or phrase that mans the same thing	38	3,68
Q5.4	When I can't think of a word during conversation in English, I use gestures	38	3,66
Q5.5	I try to guess that the other person will say next in English	38	3,74
Mean			3,62

There are five statements used to explore Compensation strategies, with the overall mean of 3.62. The highest mean goes to Q5.5 “I try to guess that the other person will say next in English” while the lowest is the question Q5.1 “I make a guess understand unfamiliar English words”. Meanwhile, students use other words as a substitute word that they may not know the word to convey information to the interlocutor, this is an application of Compensation strategies in the Q5.3 statement, namely “If I can't understand an English word, I use it. a word or phrase that mans the same thing”, in the next stamen, namely Q5.4 can also be concluded that if the speaker does not understand how to say something then he will try to explain with the help of gestures so that the listener can understand what he wants to say according to the data, many students also use this method.

**Table 11. The Report of Students’ Memory Strategies**

No	Statement	N	Mean
Q6.1	I think of relationship between what I already know and new things I learn in English	38	3,61
Q6.2	I use new English words in a sentence, so I can remember them	38	3,68
Q6.3	I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of situation in which the word might be used	38	3,71
Q6.4	I use rhymes to remember new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word	38	3,63
Q6.5	I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help	38	3,66

	remember the word		
Q6.6	I use flashcards to remember new English words	38	3,34
Q6.7	I physically act out new English words	38	3,50
Q6.8	I review English words often	38	3,66
Q6.9	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or an a street sign	38	3,66
Mean			3,60

the researcher used nine statements to explore Memories Strategies with the total mean 3.60. The highest mean is Q6.3 "*I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of situation in which the word might be used*" and the lowest on the statement is Q6.6 "I use flashcards to remember new English words" Q6.3, Q6.4, Q6.5, Q6.8, Q6.9 in the learning process using this strategy students are making a mental picture of the situation in which the word might be used, use rhymes to remember new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word, connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word, I review English words often, remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location.

**Table 12. Correlation between learning strategies and GPA**

	GPA	Sum
<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	1	,368*
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>		,023
<b>N</b>	38	38
<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	,368*	1
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	,023	
<b>N</b>	38	38

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on the data shown above, it shows that the more learning strategies students use, the higher the GPA achieved by these students, the correlation between the two variables is indicated by the value of Pearson Correlation 0.,368 which means that there is a positive relationship between the students learning strategies use and their academic achievement indicated by their GPA. This result is reasonable since it is assumed that with the combination of each language learning strategies impacted on a better learning outcome. This is also because each language learning strategy has its own benefits that support the students' learning process both on language and learning contents.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to confirm whether there is a significant relationship between the language learning strategies use the students' academic achievement. The

findings show that language learning strategies has a positive correlation with academic achievement indicated by GPA. This means that the more students use learning strategies use, the better their academic achievement. Otherwise, if students use less learning strategies, their learning achievement might be lower. The results of this study may give pedagogical implications in which the teacher should concern the learning strategies use of the students. It is also important that the students can identify the best language learning strategies that fits their learning styles and they may use as many learning strategies as possible so that they can continue to improve their learning outcomes. For future researchers who may be researching in the same field, it is hoped that larger participants can be involved to strengthen the result of the study. It is also crucial that other researcher may investigate to what extent each language learning strategy impact the students' academic achievement.

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