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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



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**Assessing Language Learning Strategy Use:  
The Case of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year EFL Students at the University of  
Mascara**

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*Dissertation submitted to the Department of English in Candidacy for the Degree of  
"Magister" in Assessment and Testing in English Language Education*

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**Academic year: 2016-2017**

## **Declaration of Originality**

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this dissertation and that neither any part of this dissertation nor the whole of it has been submitted for a degree to any other University or Institution.

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**Signature**

## **Dedications**

To my parents, the perpetual resort of care and sustenance.

To my husband for his precious support and patience .

To my kids, the light of my eyes.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to assess the students' language learning strategy (LLS) use, to check whether there are significant differences in the students' LLS use regarding gender, and to investigate whether there are significant differences in the students LLS use regarding proficiency levels. The research was conducted with first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara. A total of 157 students have completed Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) which was used as the basic instrument to identify students' learning strategies and the frequency of use. Then, three first-year EFL teachers and ten students were interviewed. In addition, the grades were obtained from the English Department administration to determine the students' proficiency level. The findings revealed that the overall use of LLS by the students is medium where meta-cognitive strategies are the most frequently used strategies and memory strategies are the least frequently used. Additionally, there are statistically no significant differences between male and female students in the use of the overall strategies and in the use of the six categories of strategies except in the use of the affective strategies which has a significant difference in favour of female. Furthermore, there are statistically significant and positive relationships between the students' academic achievement and three language learning strategies categories: Affective strategies, Cognitive strategies and Meta-cognitive strategies. Moreover the student's achievement is explained by two categories of strategies namely: Cognitive strategies and Meta-cognitive strategies. These findings lead us to conclude that the use of language learning strategies effect positively students' achievement.

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## **List of Abbreviations/ Acronyms**

ANOVA: Analysis of variance
EFL: English as a Foreign Language
ELT: English Language Teaching
ESL: English as a Second Language
FL: Foreign Language
FL1: First Foreign Language
FLL: Foreign Language Learner
GLL: Good Language Learner
LLS: Language Learning Strategy
LMD: Licence/Master/Doctorate
LT: Language Teaching
L1: First Language (Mother tongue)
L2: Second Language
MSA: Modern Standard Arabic
PhD: Doctor of Philosophy
SA: Standard Arabic

SBI: Strategy Based Instructions  
 SILL: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning  
 SNDL: System National de Documentation en Ligne  
 SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences  
 TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language  
 TESOL: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Over the years, researchers in the field of language teaching have been trying to develop theories, methods, approaches, classroom techniques and instructional materials that help for better language learning. However, issues relating to the learner have been neglected and much less attention has been paid to the language development process. While it was considered that the learner is a half of the teaching/learning partnership, it might be surprising the underestimating of the learner's role.

Since several decades, researchers started with the conviction that no single teaching method can ensure success in foreign language (FL) teaching. Therefore, they explored the possibility that success in language learning might be related to how students go about the task. More recently, writers such as Oxford, Chamot and others have carried out their studies on language learning strategies (LLS) suggesting that the use of LLS might enhance the language learning. Although, there are some overlaps between them, it is possible to divide them into three main interests; 1) a good language learner (GLL) studies, 2) studies on defining, classifying and listing LLS, and 3) studies about various learner's personal factors (such as proficiency, sex, personality, motivation etc.) that affect learners' LLS choices.

Furthermore, a considerable number of researchers have emphasized the importance of language learning strategy use by language learners, they have worked on empowering language learners to become more self -directed, resourceful, flexible, and effective in their learning ( O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

The general concept of using strategies to enhance learning is not new. For learning strategies, there are a vast number of strategies such as highlighting important ideas and summarizing. These strategies are often so simple that it is easy for students to take them for granted, but it must be remembered that the strategies themselves had to be learnt initially before they could be used.

English language learning includes those techniques that learners use to remember what they have learnt- their storage and retrieval of new information. The language learner is seen as “an active participant” in the learning process, using various mental strategies in order to sort out the system of the language to be learned. This conception, according to which the student must actively process linguistic information, learners possess a great responsibility since they become no longer passive receptacles for knowledge but thinking participants who can influence their own language learning and develop it.

According to O’Malley & Chamot (1990) language learning strategies have the potential to be “an extremely powerful learning tool”. However, as a result of their study, they concluded that many students used language learning strategies “inefficiently”. Although this was written nearly 30 years ago, according to Oxford (1990), the contribution of the learner to the learning process is still underestimated. She goes on to argue that the learner is not ‘merely a passive recipient’. She suggests that, in order to effect change in perceptions of the learner’s role in the learning process, we need to discover more about what learners do to learn successfully. The desire to contribute to further knowledge and understanding in this area has been the motivation for the current study. The main concern of the present work is to assess language learning strategy use among first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara, therefore the researcher tries to answer the following questions:

1. What are the language learning strategies used by first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara as reported in the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)?
2. Are there differences in the students’ language learning strategy use regarding gender?
3. Are there differences in the students’ language learning strategy use regarding their academic achievement?

The investigation throughout this work will attempt to provide arguments for the research hypotheses that can be roughly formulated as follows:

- 1- First-year EFL students at the University of Mascara may use different Language Learning Strategies as reported in the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL).
- 2- There may be differences in the students' language learning strategy use regarding gender.
- 3- There may be differences in the students' language learning strategy use regarding their proficiency level.

The present research tries to find out the validity of these hypotheses. Thus, in order to assess first-year EFL students' LLS use, the researcher devised a questionnaire (SILL) to first-year EFL students. Then, two interviews are administered with students and teachers at the Department of English at the University of Mascara.

This research work consists of four chapters that are designed to enlighten the reader about the field of research. The first chapter provides a theoretical overview of language learning strategies. It deals with definitions, characteristics and taxonomies of language learning strategies. Next, the chapter describes the different factors affecting learner's LLS choice. Besides, it provides previous research into assessment of LLS use. Then, the chapter presents the assessment tools for language learning strategy use.

The second chapter attempts to give a clear idea about the circumstances that shaped first-year students' LLS use. For this purpose, It starts with a general presentation of English Language Teaching/Learning Situation in Algeria. Then, it describes the EFL teaching/learning situation at Mascara University, explains how English is taught there and presents the syllabus used. This chapter is also concerned with the presentation of the research design and procedure; it presents and explains the research methodology. Besides, it states the research questions and hypotheses before giving the profile of students who participated in the study. The research instruments are introduced, their choice is justified and the procedure of data analysis is explained.

The third chapter is based on action research; it deals with the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. After the analysis of the data obtained from the various instruments, the results are interpreted via qualitative and quantitative analyses of the collected data. Finally, the main research results are discussed by making reference to the findings and explaining the degree of evidence of the collected data.

The fourth and last chapter provides some suggestions and recommendations related to the Language Learning Strategy Instruction. It is concerned with what might be beneficial as pedagogical implications. It attempts to suggest some implications for instruction in order to make EFL learning easier and more effective by using helpful language learning strategies.

### 1.1. Introduction

Over the last four decades, the attention has shifted from “what to learn” to “how to learn” within the field of language learning and teaching. Since the 1970s, researchers have investigated on methods and learning strategies that help the learners to achieve autonomy and to make learning easier and more effective with a great emphasis on learners rather than teachers. At the same time, there has been a focus on how learners treat new information and what types of strategies they employ to understand, learn or recall the information.

Before starting the research, we have to look at many of the central issues on the strategies of learning the language and its use assessment; however, it is necessary first and foremost to achieve a working definition of what is the language learning strategy (LLS). Later, a list of LLSs characteristics is discussed in order to give a background for classification systems of learning strategies proposed by different scholars. After that, it is essential to mention the factors affecting learner's LLS choice followed by previous international researches on students' LLSs. Finally, since the current study is related to the dual concepts of language learning strategies use and its assessment, various methods for data collection with respect to LLS are presented. These elements that are central to the current study will be addressed in this chapter.

### 1.2. Definition of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies have been one of the most exciting research topics in the field of second/foreign language teaching and learning for four decades. Many studies have contributed to our understanding of the important roles that LLSs play in acquisition and learning of second or foreign languages. Numerous researchers and experts have defined language learning strategies from different points of view. However, it is useful to identify the basic term “strategy” in order to understand the language learning strategies. This term comes from the ancient Greek word “strategia” that has been marked on the art of war or dexterity mode. The term “strategy” is defined by Cambridge University Dictionary Online (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>,



Retrieved 8/02/16) as: “a detailed plan for achieving success in situations such as war, politics, business, industry or sport”. The warlike meaning of “strategia” has fortunately fallen away, but a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim the control and goal directedness remain in the modern version of the word (Oxford, 2003). Therefore, goal-orientation is a key segment of any definition of “strategy”.

Different researchers have used various terms that reflect goal-orientation in their definitions of learning strategies, such as “goal”, “intention”, “purpose”, “conscious action”, “awareness”, or “control”. Additionally, they all agree that learning strategies are means for learners to achieve their learning goals. Accordingly, Lan (2005, p. 16) states that the definition form of “learning strategy” is usually: “X [in order] to achieve Y”.

Great attention has been given to “how to learn” not only “what to learn” in the field of language teaching and learning, there has been also a growing awareness of the importance of the strategies used by learners in the language learning process. Since, students are the only ones who can actually do the learning even with the best teachers and methods. Accordingly, Nyikos and Oxford (1993) point: “learning begins with the learner” (cited in Griffiths, 2003, p. 14). In spite of this activity, however, defining language learning strategies remains no easy task. Skehan (1989) calls them an “explosion of activity”, Ellis (1994) finds the concept “fuzzy”, and Cohen (1998, p.3) talks of “conflicting views” (ibid).

The most important issue in LLS is the definition. Although LLS were defined by a number of leading figures in foreign language field (Bialystok, 1978; Rubin, 1987; Wenden and Rubin, 1987; Chamot, 1987; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Ellis, 1994; and Cohen, 1998). Yet, there have been no clear definition before Chamot's (1987) research.

According to Ellis (1994, cited in Prakongchati, 2007, p. 27), the best method to define language learning strategies is to list their main characteristics. To do so, collecting the definitions of language learning strategies is a way to facilitate the

process of defining the term of language learning strategies in this study. The following list of definitions provides a clear vision about the subject studied.

Table 1.1. Definitions of Language Learning Strategies

<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Definition</b> <b>Language learning strategies have been defined as...</b>
Bialystok (1978: 76)	[M]ethods operated in the model of second language learning to exploit available information to increase the proficiency of second language learning.
Stern (1983: 405)	[P]articular forms of observable learning behavior, more or less consciously employed by the learner.
Weinstein and Mayer (1986: 315)	[T]he behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning that are intended to influence the learner's encoding process.
Rubin (1987)	[S]trategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affects learning directly.
Chamot (1987: 71)	[T]echniques, approaches or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content area information.
Wenden (1987: 6)	[L]anguage learning behaviors learners actually engage in to learn and regulate the learning of a second language... what they know about the strategies they use... what they know about aspects of their language learning other than the strategies they use.
Wenden and Rubin (1987: 19)	[T]he behaviors and thought processes that learners use in the process of learning including any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information.
Oxford (1990:8)	[S]pecific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations.
MacIntyre (1994: 185)	[T]he techniques and tricks that learners use to make the language easier to master.
O'Malley and Chamot (1995: 1)	[T]he special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information.
Cohen (1998: 4)	[L]earning processes which are consciously selected by the learner. The element of choice is important here because this is what gives a strategy its special character. These are also moves which the learner is at least partially aware of, even if full attention is not being given to them.

Brown (2000: 122-127)	[S]pecific attacks that are made on a given problem. They are moment-by-moment techniques employed to solve problems passed by second language input and output.
Weinstein, Husman, and Dierking (2000: 727)	[A]ny thoughts, behaviors, beliefs, or emotions that facilitate the acquisition, understanding, or later transfer of new knowledge and skills.
Thornbury (2006:115)	[T]echniques or behaviours that learners consciously apply in order to enhance their learning.

(Adapted from Prakongchati, 2007, p. 27 and from Tamada, 1996, p. 3)

These definitions can be divided into two parts: the elements that LLS include, and the purpose that learners use LLS for. Tarone (1983), for instance, defines a learning strategy as "an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language ... to incorporate these into one's interlanguage competence" (cited in Lan, 2005, p. 16).

As seen earlier, strategies consistently include goals or purposes. The goals demonstrated by Tarone's definition are to reach different competencies in the language: "develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence" and "incorporate these into one's interlanguage competence". This definition does not underline learner autonomy, cultural understanding, or other elements of language learning. As to the previous factor, for example, Bialystok (1978), defined it as "optional means", and Rubin (1987) as "strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affects learning directly". From these definitions, we can say that Bialystok's (1978) definition gives no explanation about this "optional means". On the other hand, Rubin (1987) dealt with it only as the action affecting learning directly. Thus, it is obvious that both researchers have no agreement about the elements of LLS.

As to the second factor, Bialystok's (1978) definition is "to improve competence in a second language". This definition focused on being more proficient learners, rather than learning effectively or easily. While Rubin's (1987) definition gives no information about this. Hence, there is also no agreement between them. However, since Chamot's (1987) study, the definition has been changed. Chamot (1987),

O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and Oxford (1990), defined both factors in more detail than the previous studies. Furthermore, their definitions have become alike (Tamada, 1996, p. 3). For example, as to the previous factor, Chamot (1987) defined it as "techniques, or approaches, or deliberate actions", O'Malley and Chamot (1990) treated it as "special thoughts or behaviours", and Oxford (1990) identifies it as "specific actions". According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), learning strategies remain unclear whether they are thoughts or behaviours (observable or not), or both. However, Oxford dealt with LLS as both thoughts and behaviours although she defined it only as "actions".

As to the second factor, the purpose of using LLS has not been mentioned as being "proficient learners", but as being able to: "facilitate the learning" (Chamot, 1987), "help them comprehend" (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990), Oxford's (1990) definition explicit many student- aimed goals "make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable", hence, this definition extends O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) list of goals (cited in Lan, 2005, p. 17).

It is remarkable that, since Chamot's (1987) study, the purpose of using LLS has changed from becoming good or successful learners who speak a second language fluently, to becoming intelligent learners who know very well about how to learn a foreign language more successfully (Tamada, 1996). In particular, Oxford's definition contains all the elements that foreign language learners need to be intelligent learners. Therefore, Oxford's definition of LLS will be used in this study.

### **1.3. Characteristics of Language Learning Strategies**

It is believed (according to the above discussion) that language learning strategies differ in many ways. Different writers use different terminologies to refer to the strategies. For example, Wenden and Rubin (1987) use the term "learner strategies", O'Malley and Chamot (1990) use the term "learning strategies", and Oxford (1990) uses the term "language learning strategies". Even that the terminology used for language learning strategies is not similar among the researchers in the field, there are

a number of basic characteristics accepted by them. According to Blažková (2011), Oxford (1990) describes these characteristics as features which:

1. Contribute to the main goal - communicative competence. Learning strategies can foster particular aspects of that competence; grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence.

2. Allow learners to become more self-directed. Self-direction is so important for language learners, since the teacher will not always be around to guide the learners as they use the language outside the classroom. Oxford (1990) claims that "an appropriate use of learning strategies helps learners to take control of their own learning".

3. Expand the role of teachers. Becoming facilitator after being director, manager and leader may discomfort some teachers who feel that their position is being challenged.

4. Are problem orientated. Learning strategies are used because there is a problem to solve, a task to complete, or an objective to attain.

5. Are specific actions taken by learners. Learning strategies are specific behaviors done by learners to enhance their learning, such as, taking notes, self-evaluating and guessing the meaning of the word.

6. Include many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive. Learning strategies include also meta-cognitive functions like planning, evaluating; emotional, social and other functions as well.

7. Support learning both directly and indirectly. In the subsequent section, classification of direct and indirect strategies will be discussed in detail.

8. Are not always observable. Some learning strategies are not easily observable to the human eye. Therefore, Oxford (1990) states that teachers find it difficult to know about learning strategies their learners use.

9. Are often conscious. Consciousness is included in the ancient Greek definition of the term strategy; however, some researchers in the field of language learning debate whether consciousness is a condition for them to be considered as strategies. Ironically, making appropriate learning strategies automatic (unconscious) is usually recommended in strategy training.

10. Can be taught. Unlike learning styles, learning strategies can be taught through strategy training. Its goal is to explore ways that the learners can learn the target language more effectively (Cohen, 1998). Strategy training helps learners become more aware of the strategies they use.

11. Are flexible. Learning strategies are not always found in foreseeable modes. Williams and Burden (1997) state that learners made choice over how to use and combine strategies. On the other hand, Oxford (1990) notes that sometimes strategies are combined in a predictable way.

12. Are influenced by a variety of factors. Many researchers agree that there are a number of factors influencing strategy choice, such as task requirements, stage of learning, degree of awareness, personality, age, sex, learning style, motivation and purpose for learning the language. Oxford (1990) suggests that learners who are more advanced, more aware and more motivated apparently use a wide variety of appropriate strategies.

(Adapted from Blažková, 2011, pp. 15-17)

As a conclusion for the above description, it is obvious that some learning strategies are behavioral and can be directly observed, others are mental and not directly observed. Furthermore, strategies are sometimes described as belonging to “successful” or “unsuccessful” learners. Strategies have also been classified according to whether they affect language learning directly or indirectly. The list of learning strategies features has provided a fundamental concept about them. This review can provide a background to the subsequent section of the thesis that discusses language learning strategies classification systems.

### **1.4. Classification Systems of Language Learning Strategies**

Language learning strategies research began in the early seventies focusing on the LLSs use of successful ESL/EFL learners (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975). As reported in Table 1.2, there are many researchers who have studied and classified language learning strategies in various ways (Lee, 2010). The following table summarizes the main background of LLSs classifications and gives a clear description of this process. These LLSs classifications have been proposed by ten researchers.

Table 1.2. Language Learning Strategy Classifications Since the 1970s

<b>Language learning strategies classification</b>	<b>Researcher(s) and Year</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning strategy</li> <li>2. Active strategy</li> <li>3. Empathetic strategy</li> <li>4. Experimental strategy</li> <li>5. Formal strategy</li> <li>6. Semantic strategy</li> <li>7. Practice strategy</li> <li>8. Communication strategy</li> <li>9. Monitoring strategy</li> <li>10. Internalization strategy</li> </ol>	Stern (1975)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active task approach</li> <li>2. Realization of language as a system</li> <li>3. Realisation of language as a means of communication and interaction</li> <li>4. Management of affective demands</li> <li>5. Monitoring L2 performance</li> </ol>	Naiman et al. (1978)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategies that directly affect learning               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clarification/verification</li> <li>▪ Monitoring</li> <li>▪ Memorisation</li> <li>▪ Guessing/inductive inferencing</li> <li>▪ Deductive reasoning</li> <li>▪ Practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Processes that contribute indirectly to learning               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creates opportunities for practice</li> <li>▪ Production tricks</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Rubin (1981)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cognitive strategies</li> <li>2. Meta-cognitive strategies</li> <li>3. Social-affective strategies</li> </ol>	Brown & Palinscar (1982)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategies for coping with target language rules</li> <li>2. Strategies for receiving performance</li> <li>3. Strategies for producing performance</li> <li>4. Strategies for organizing learning</li> </ol>	Carver (1984)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meta-cognitive strategies</li> <li>2. Cognitive strategies</li> <li>3. Social strategies</li> <li>4. Communication strategies</li> </ol>	Ellis and Sinclair (1989)

1. Cognitive strategies	O'Malley and Chamot
2. Meta-cognitive strategies	(1990)
3. Social-affective strategies	
<hr/>	
Direct strategies:	
1. Memory strategies	
2. Cognitive strategies	
3. Compensation strategies	Oxford (1990)
Indirect strategies:	
1. Meta-cognitive strategies	
2. Affective strategies	
3. Social strategies	
<hr/>	
A. Related to the taught program	Coleman (1991)
B. Extra to the class	
C. Bucking the system	
<hr/>	
1. Management and planning strategies	
2. Cognitive strategies	
3. Communicative-experiential strategies	Stern (1992)
4. Interpersonal strategies	
5. Affective strategies	
<hr/>	
I. Language learning strategies in the classroom-related category(CRP):	
1. To be well-prepared for the lessons	
2. To keep up with the teacher while studying in the classroom	
3. To get the teacher's attention in the classroom	
4. To learn new vocabulary in the classroom lessons	Intaraprasert
5. To avoid being distracted while studying	
6. To solve the problems encountered in the classroom lessons	(2000)
7. To pass the English examinations	
II. Strategies in the classroom independent category (CIP):	
1. To expand their knowledge of English vocabulary and expressions	
2. To improve one's listening skill	
3. To improve one's speaking skill	
4. To improve one's writing skill	
5. To acquire general knowledge in English	

(Adapted from Lee, 2010, p. 139)



It is clear that defining language learning strategies is not the only component that remains questioned in the field of LLS, but classifying them is also unanswered, according to Oxford (1990):

“[T]here is no complete agreements on exactly what strategies are; how many strategies exist; how they should be defined, demarcated, and categorized; and whether it is - or ever will be - possible to create a real, scientifically validated hierarchy of strategies...Classification conflicts are inevitable.”

(Quoted in Prakongchati, 2007, p. 36)

The fact of using different criteria and systems in defining and classifying language learning strategies causes contradictions and inadequacy across taxonomies. Language learning strategy has been classified differently according to researchers' own experiences. In other words, researchers have their own classification systems of language learning strategies, which are derived from their direct experiences, i.e., their personal experiences (Stern, 1983), the understanding discovered from their own language learning strategy investigations (Oxford, 1990), or their indirect experiences, i.e., their knowledge and understanding expanded from reviewing other researchers' works and theories (Ellis and Sinclair, 1989) (cited in Prakongchati, 2007). Next, three LLS classification systems (Rubin, 1975; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; and Oxford, 1990) will be presented, and discussed in more detail.

### **1.4.1. Rubin's (1981) Classification of Language Learning Strategies**

Under her definition of language learning strategies; the techniques or devices which a learner may use, Rubin (1981, cited in Prakongchati, 2007) conducts interviews with second language students, then, she classifies language learning strategies into two main general categories according to strategy functions: direct strategies – direct contribution of process to learning; and indirect strategies – indirect contribution of process to learning. Rubin's two-part classification of language learning strategies comprises six general strategies which may contribute directly to the language learning process, and two strategies which may contribute indirectly to the language learning process.

#### 1.4.1.1. Direct Strategies

- Clarification/verification e.g. asking for an example of how to use a particular word or expression.
- Guessing/inductive inferencing e.g. using clues from other items in the sentence/phrase, or key words in a sentence to guess.
- Deductive reasoning e.g. inferring grammatical rules by analogy, or grouping words according to similarity of endings.
- Practice e.g. experimenting with new words in isolation and in context, or using mirror for practice.
- Memorization e.g. taking notes of new items with or without texts and definitions.
- Monitoring e.g. correcting error in own/other's pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and style.

(Rubin, 1981, cited in Prakongchati, 2007, p. 40)

#### 1.4.1.2. Indirect Strategies

- Create opportunities for practice e.g. initiating conversation with fellow student/teacher/native speaker, or creating situation with natives in order to verify/test/practice.
- Production tricks (related to communication focus/drive, motivation/opportunity for exposure), e.g. using circumlocution and paraphrase to get message across, or repeating sentence or further understanding (ibid).

It can be noticed from this two-part classification, that most of the strategies tend to comprise communication strategies rather than focus only on either formal language learning (inside the classroom) or informal language learning (outside the classroom). This inclusion caused a controversy since some scholars see language learning strategies as two separate appearances of language learner behaviour. For instance, Brown (1980) makes a distinction between language learning strategies and communication strategies arguing that “communication is the output modality and learning is the input modality” (cited in Prakongchaty, 2007, p. 41). In addition, Ellis (1994) agrees with Brown's (1980) idea that there is “no easy way of telling whether a strategy is motivated by a desire to learn or a desire to communicate” (cited in

Prakongchaty, 2007, p. 41). The uncertainty to distinguish between communication and language learning strategies caused a difficulty in deciding what to include in learning strategy taxonomies.

### **1.4.2. O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) Classification of LLS**

With a different point of view, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) concentrate on theory development in second language acquisition that arises from cognitive psychology. This theory is based on the information-processing model of learning. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) base their language learning strategy research on a cognitive psychological framework. Although, linguistic theories of foreign language acquisition maintain that language is learned separately from cognitive skills and operated according to different principles from most learned behaviours, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) note that this view is not exactly precise and it should be completed with a view that contains both cognitive and meta-cognitive levels in second language learning (ibid).

According to Griffiths (2003), the meta-cognitive and cognitive categories correspond approximately to Rubin's indirect and direct strategies. O'Malley and his colleagues developed a taxonomy of their own, in which they identify three categories divided into 26 strategies.

**1.4.2.1. Meta-cognitive Strategies** are an operational function and planning for monitoring and evaluating the success of a learning task, e.g. self-management (being mindful of the requirements that enhance learning and trying to create those requirements), self-monitoring (involving verifying or adjusting one's comprehension or production), self-evaluation (assessing one's linguistic and communicative competence) of learning after completing the task (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, cited in Lan, 2005, p. 21).

**1.4.2.2. Cognitive Strategies** are mental manipulation or conversion of materials or tasks to promote comprehension, acquisition, or retention, e.g. repetition (imitating a language model aloud or silently), key word (recall an aimed item by choosing an L1 word which is similar to the new word acoustically and making mental images linking with the new word), inferencing (employ all existing sources of information to guess the meaning of unrecognized items and fill in missing parts) (ibid).

**1.4.2.3. Social/Affective Strategies** are social interaction operated to support in the comprehension or retention of information, as well as mental control over personal factors interfering with learning, e.g. cooperation (collaborate with colleagues to compare notes, solve a language problem or get feedback on a task), questioning for clarification (asking the teacher or a native speaker for repetition, explanation and/or examples), self-talk (encouraging oneself about one's ability to complete a task by making positive statements) (ibid).

### **1.4.3. Oxford's (1990) Classification of Language Learning Strategies**

From an extensive review of the literature, Oxford gathered a large number of language learning strategies and, similarly to Rubin (1981), divided them on the basis of strategy functions into two main categories: direct strategies (directly involve the target language) and indirect strategies (supporting direct strategies with internal guide – self-directed learning). (See 1.4.1)

Oxford's strategy system varies in several aspects. It is more detailed and comprehensive. She proposes the categorized language learning strategies by questionnaire data, which divided language learning strategies into six groups: memory strategies (those used for storage information), cognitive strategies (the mental strategies learners use to make sense of their learning), compensation strategies (help learners to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication), meta-cognitive strategies (help learners to manage their learning), affective strategies (are concerned with the learner's feelings such as confidence), and social strategies (involve learning by interaction with others) (cited in Prakongchaty, 2007, p. 45).

In addition, the direct and the indirect strategies support mutually each other and each strategy group can be connected with and assist every other strategy group, accordingly Ellis (1994) states that Oxford's taxonomy is "perhaps the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies to date" (ibid).

Oxford's language learning strategies classification underlies the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which has been used by Oxford and others for a great deal of research in the learning strategy field (Griffiths, 2003) (Issues relating to the items and categories of the SILL will be dealt with in Chapter Two). All the items in the SILL depict some of the subgroups and particular techniques. That is the reason

why all these groups and subgroups of language learning strategies will be described in detail in the following part.

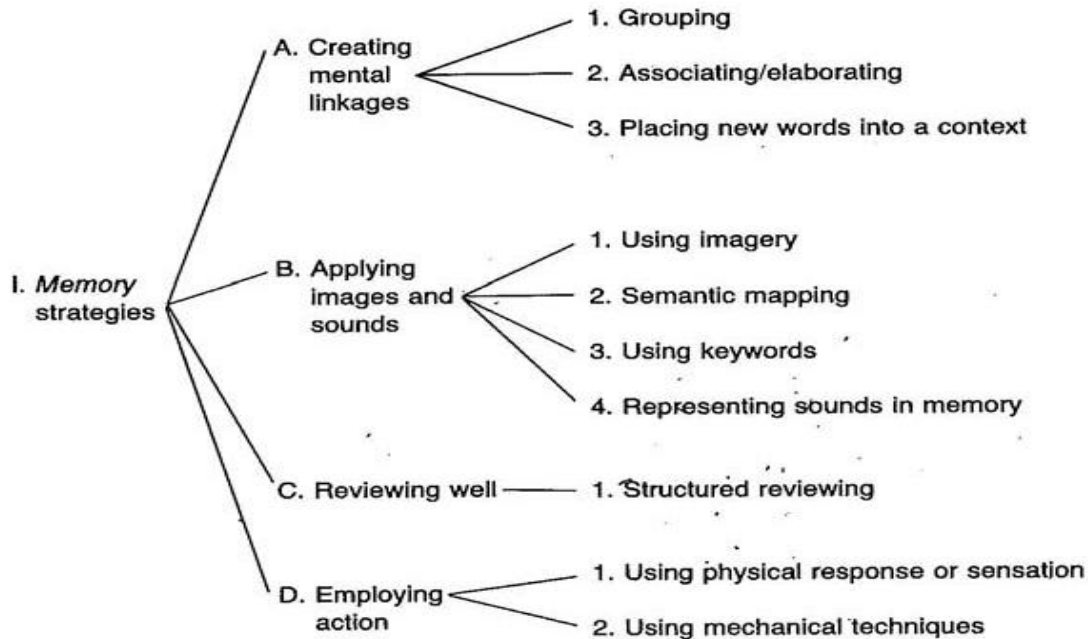
### **1.4.3.1. Direct Strategies for Language Learning**

Direct strategies with its three groups (memory, cognitive and compensation) require mental processing of the language, but each group does this processing in a different way and for various purposes (Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 21). We should mention that direct strategies are aimed at helping learners to identify what is important and uneasy for them in the process of learning.

- **Memory Strategies:** (also called mnemonics) are important in the process of learning f foreign language since a lot of information (such as vocabulary) is necessary to remember. According to Oxford (1990), there are a number of principles reflected by memory strategies, such as arranging things in order, making associations and reviewing. Since a meaning is included there all these principles must be meaningful to a learner. Memory strategies help language learners transfer information from the basic fact level to the skill level, where knowledge is more automatic. Moreover, it is more easily restored and less possibly that the knowledge will be lost after a period of time when it is not used (Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 22).

Memory strategies frequently imply different types of material. That is, to create visual images of words and phrases, to give verbal labels to pictures. Memory strategies are divided into four groups: Creating Mental Linkages, Applying Images and Sounds, Reviewing Well, and Employing Actions. The first letter of each of these strategy group spell CARE, an acronym that itself can be considered as a memory aid: “Take CARE of your memory and your memory will take CARE of you.” (ibid). Oxford (1990) gives a classification of memory strategies in detail as shown in the figure below.

Figure 1.1. Oxford's Classification of Memory Strategies



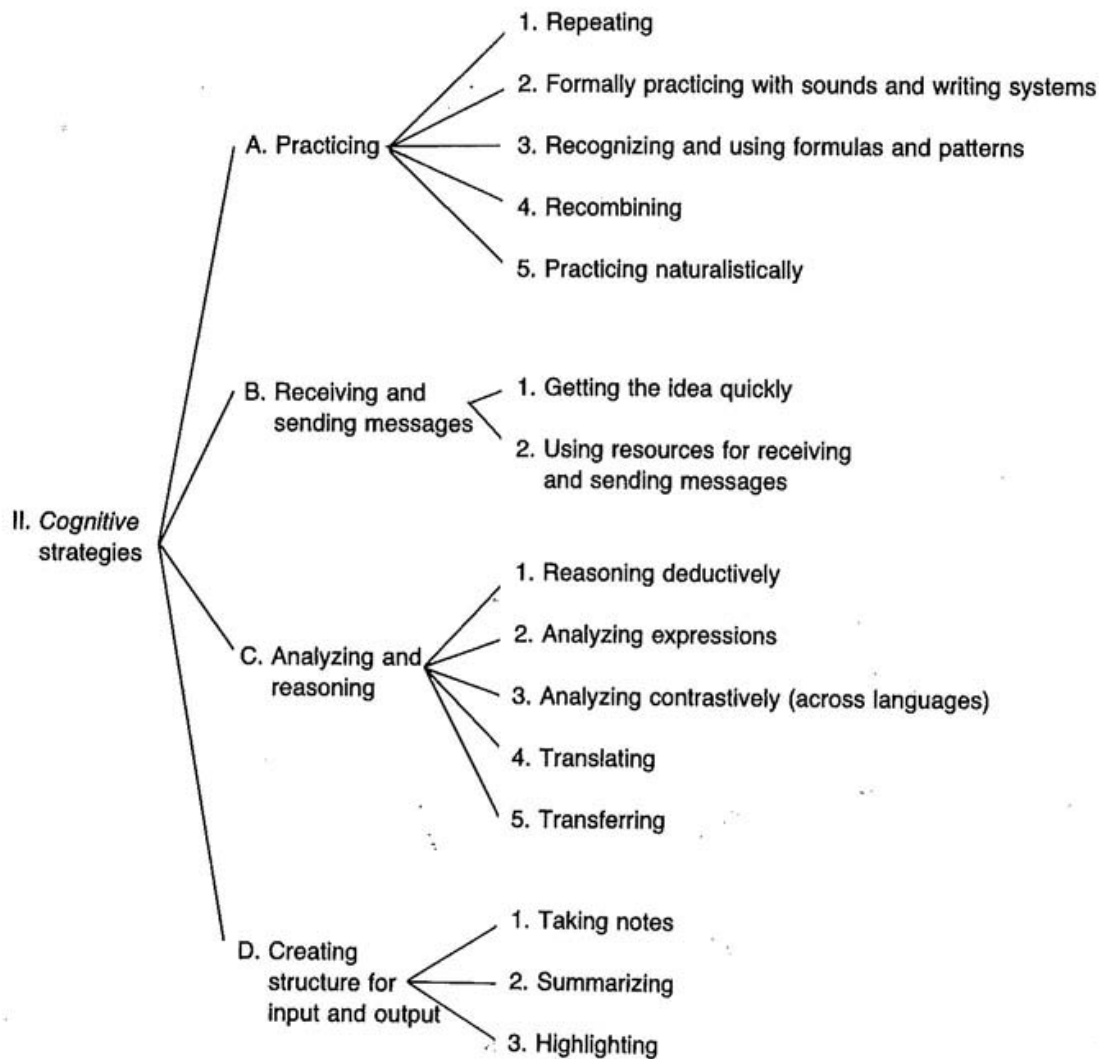
(Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 91)

▪ Cognitive Strategies: Cognitive strategies play a crucial role in the process of learning a foreign language. According to Blažková (2011, p. 23), Williams and Burden (1997) define cognitive strategies as: "mental processes directly concerned with the processing of information". Oxford divides this group into four groups of strategies: Practicing, Receiving and sending messages, Analyzing and reasoning, and Creating structure for input and output. The initial letters of each strategy sets can be combined to create the acronym PRAC, because "Cognitive strategies are practical for language learning" (ibid).

Practicing strategies are to the most considerable cognitive strategies, although, learners are not all the time conscious of it. Strategies for receiving and sending messages are essential instruments because it can help learners to identify the main idea through skimming or scanning. Using resources assist learners to take advantage of a group of resources. Learners tend to "reason out" the new language by developing a formal model based on analysis and comparison. They tend to create new rules and review them when new information is available. Even if this process helps them in many situations, the learners sometimes unreasonably transfer rules or expressions

from the mother tongue directly to the new language. Although, it is regarded to be a normal phase of language learning, sometimes language learners get stuck in this phase (ibid). Oxford's (1990) classification of cognitive strategies is presented in the following figure.

Figure 1.2. Oxford's Classification of Cognitive Strategies



(Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 92)

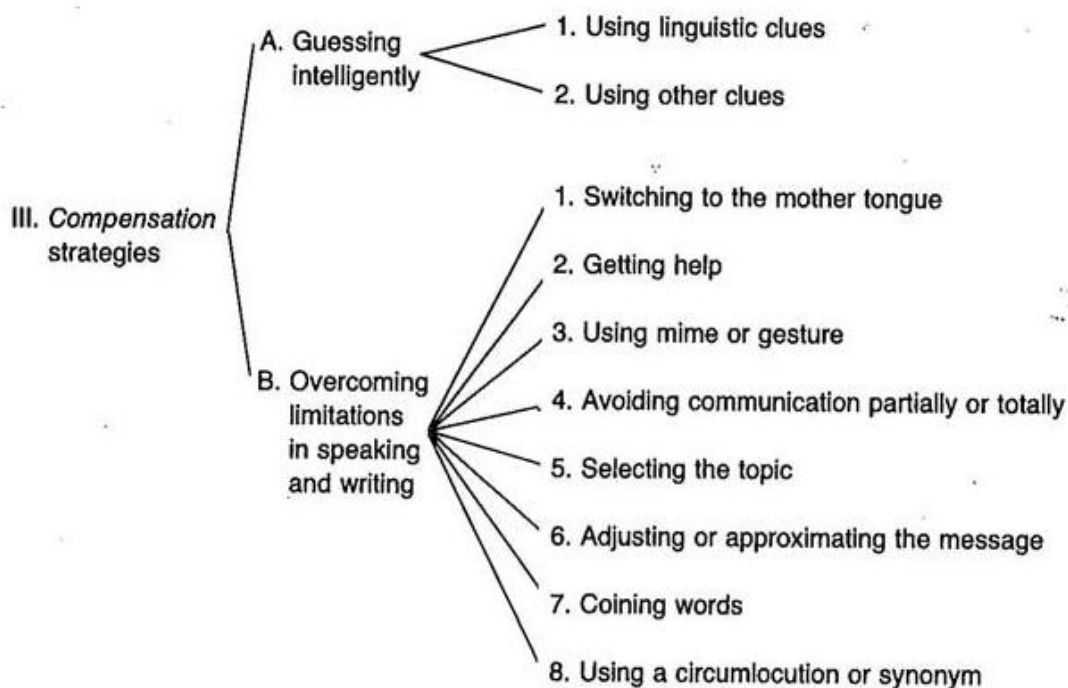
▪ Compensation Strategies: Compensation strategies are used by learners to overcome difficulties caused by limitations in the field of knowledge. Learners can use the new language for understanding or production with the help of these strategies. According to Oxford (1990) compensation strategies are expected to compensate for the learners' deficit in grammar and vocabulary. As shown in the figure (1.3) below,

there are two types of compensation strategies: Guessing intelligently in listening and reading, and overcoming the limitations in speaking and writing.

Guessing intelligently comprises using a variety of linguistic or non-linguistic clues in order to enable the learners to guess the meaning when they do not know all the words. Concerning guessing strategy, Oxford (1990) says: "Advanced learners and even native speakers use guessing when they have not heard something well enough, when they don't know a new word, or when the meaning is hidden between the lines" (Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 24).

The compensation occurs not only when we want to understand the new language, but also in its production. In this regard, compensation strategies for the production can help learners to use the language, so that they get more practice. Using compensation strategies make learners fluent in what they already know. Additionally, asking for help may provide learners with the missing information in the target language (ibid). A system of Oxford's (1990) compensation strategies is demonstrated in the following figure:

Figure 1.3. Oxford's Classification of Compensation Strategies



(Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 92)



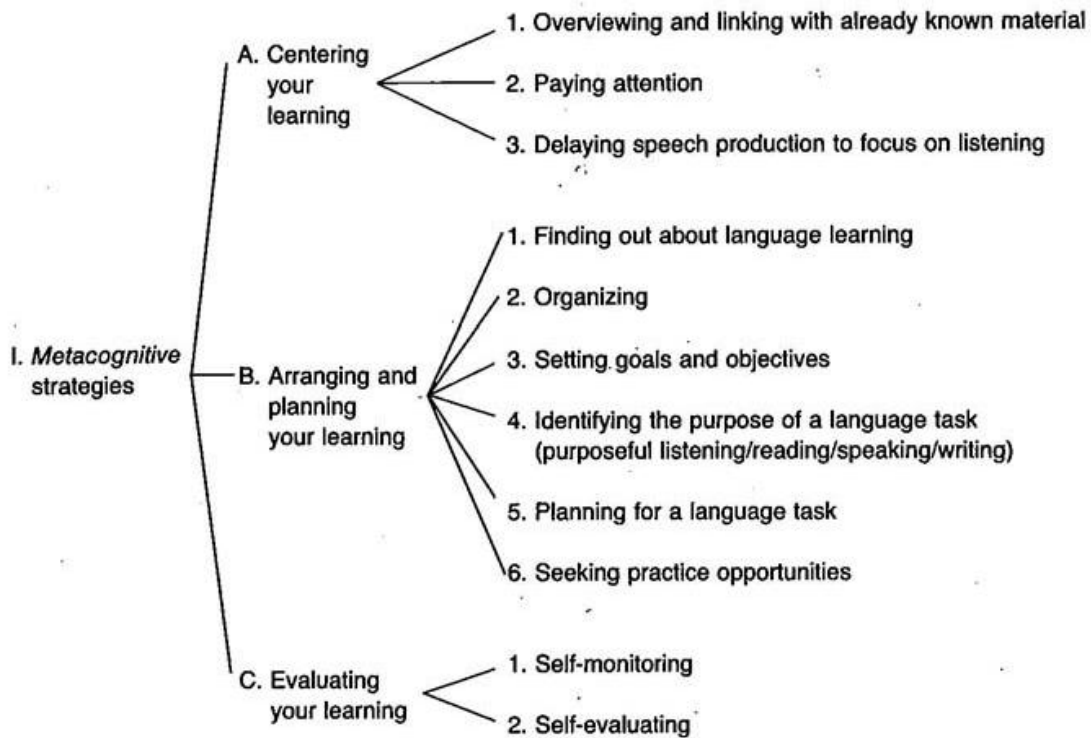
### 1.4.3.2. Indirect Strategies for Language Learning

Indirect strategies (meta-cognitive, affective and social), as already explained in this work, support language learning indirectly, that is, without the including of target language. Oxford (1990) states that indirect strategies are interrelated with direct strategies and they are their exact opposite. She adds that indirect strategies are helpful in all language situations and they are established in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Indirect strategies focus on comfortable psychological climate that gives the learners appropriate environment for language learning and makes it easier (Blažková, 2011, p. 25).

In the following part, the three groups (meta-cognitive, affective and social strategies) of the indirect strategies will be discussed.

- **Meta-cognitive Strategies:** According to Williams and Burden (1997), meta-cognitive strategies involve an awareness of what one is doing and the strategies one is employing, as well as knowledge about the process of learning. Oxford (1990) states that language learners are often confused by grammatical rules, unfamiliar vocabulary, different writing systems, and different styles of teaching. It is proposed that to get back learner's focus, conscious use of meta-cognitive strategies, namely paying attention and over viewing / linking with already known material, is necessary. In general, meta-cognitive strategies help learners to arrange and plan their language learning in an effective way, notice and learn from errors and evaluate their overall progress (ibid). Oxford's (1990) classification of the meta-cognitive strategies is shown in the figure below:

Figure 1.4. Oxford's Classification of Meta-cognitive Strategies

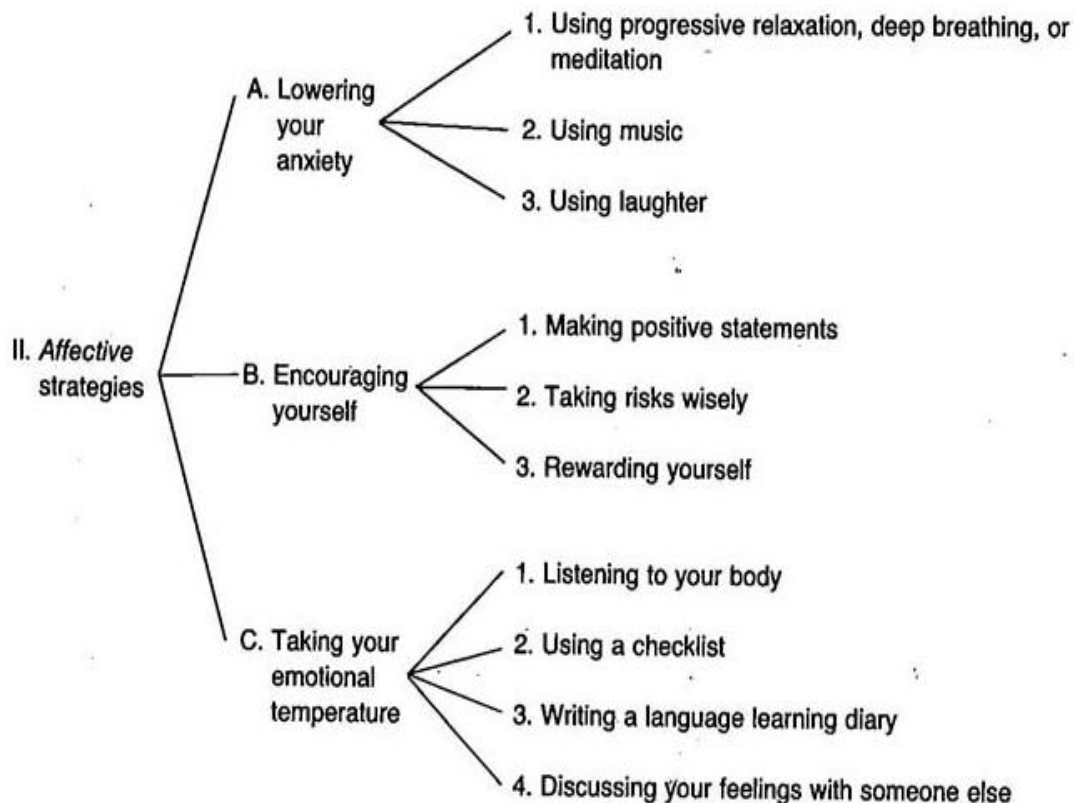


(Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 93)

▪ Affective Strategies: The affective side of the learner influences certainly language learning success or failure, for instance, positive feelings and emotions can make language learning more enjoyable while negative feelings can hinder development. Regarding positive and negative emotions, the teacher can have a huge impact on the classroom atmosphere.

Not only teachers' beliefs and attitudes can influence language learning process but they can also affect it by changing the social structure of the classroom to give students more responsibility, and by providing increased amounts of naturalistic communication (Blažková, 2011, p.26). Oxford's (1990) classification of affective strategies is shown in the following figure:

Figure 1.5: Oxford's Classification of Affective Strategies



(Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 94)

▪ Social Strategies: Language is a means of communication among people; it is considered a social behaviour. Asking questions is one of the important social interactions; it gets learners closer to the meaning and supports their understanding. Asking questions also indicates interest and involvement, furthermore, the response of the conversation partner refers whether the question was understood and provides an indirect feedback about the learner's productive skills. In addition to asking questions, cooperating especially with more proficient users of the target language is important for language learners. Moreover, cooperation requires a group spirit so that the process of language learning can become more enjoyable and achievable (ibid, p. 27).

Figure 1.6. Oxford’s Classification of Social Strategies



(Oxford, 1990, cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 94)

This section dealt with classifications of language learning strategies. Among the ten classifications mentioned above, the most evident differences appear in the main categories of language learning strategies. It can be noticed that the process of introducing classification systems for language learning strategies is far from clearness due to interfering and contradictory opinions.

Scholars have different ways of classifying language learning strategies. This depends on their own experiences, their investigation, and their literature review. With respect to earlier research into language learning strategies, Oxford’s (1990) classification of LLS is more comprehensive and detailed concerning the division of learning strategies into groups and subgroups. Based on her list of strategies, Oxford (1990) developed the SILL, which is a beneficial instrument developed to test ESL/EFL learners’ strategy use. This will be valuable in the practical part.

Recent studies (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Phillips, 1991) implementing the SILL affirmed that using language learning strategies would have valuable influence on language proficiency. Therefore, the researcher in the current study adopted Oxford’s classification using the SILL inventory to assess students’

language learning strategy use. As a result, researchers have been investigating on the factors that affect language learning strategy use.

### **1.5. Factors Affecting Learner's LLS Choice**

According to Tamada (1996), Oxford (1990) has synthesized existing research on how the following factors influence the choice of strategies used among students learning a foreign language.

**1.5.1. Gender:** Females reported higher overall strategy use than males in many studies (although sometimes males exceeded females in the use of a certain strategy). So many researches about the affect of gender on LLS choice has been carried out. However, some researchers have pointed out the significant relationship between them even in such limited studies. For example, Politzer (1983) studied learning strategies of 90 university students in the United States, and found that female students used social strategies significantly more than male students. Oxford and Nyikos (1989) investigated 1200 university students and showed that female students used four out of five strategies more often than male students. Ehrman and Oxford (1989) examined 78 university students and found that female students used four out often strategies more often than male students.

**1.5.2. Motivation:** More motivated students tended to use more strategies than less motivated students, and the private reason for studying the language was important in the choice of strategies. In the 1980s, researchers began to study the relationship between motivation and LLS choice. For example, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) reported the relationship between them as : "The degree of expressed motivation to learn the language was the most powerful influence on strategy choice....The more motivated students used learning strategies of all these kinds more often than did the less motivated students" (Quoted in Tamada, 1996, p. 7). However, it is not clear how motivation affects LLS choice. Further research will be required.

**1.5.3. Type of Task:** The nature of the task assisted identify the strategies employed to carry out the task.

**1.5.4. Age and L2 Stage:** Students of different ages and stages of L2 learning used different strategies, with certain strategies often being employed by older or more advanced students.

**1.5.5. Learning Style:** Learning style usually select the choice of L2 learning strategies. For example, analytic-style students preferred strategies such as contrastive analysis, rule-learning, and dissecting words and phrases, while global students used strategies to find meaning (guessing, scanning, predicting) and to converse without knowing all the words (paraphrasing, gesturing).

**1.5.6. Cultural Background:** Rote memorization and other forms of memorization were more dominant among some Asian students than among students from other cultural backgrounds. Certain other cultures also appeared to encourage this strategy among learners.

**1.5.7. Attitudes and Beliefs:** These were reported to have a profound effect on the strategies learners choose, with negative attitudes and beliefs often causing poor strategy use or lack of orchestration of strategies.

**1.5.8. Tolerance of Ambiguity:** Students who were more tolerant of ambiguity used significantly different learning strategies in some instances than the students who were less tolerant of ambiguity.

### **1.6. Previous Research into Assessment of Language Learning Strategy Use**

Numerous research studies have been done about dependency of “gender”, “academic achievement” and “Language Learning Strategies” by foreign language learners (FLL). Next, some significant ones will be mentioned due to their close relationship with the current study.

#### **1.6.1. LLS and Achievement in the Target Language**

Research studies relating the subject shows that the conscious use of such strategies has a positive correlation with language achievement and proficiency. Studies conducted around the world, showed that students who were successful in their language learning usually reported higher levels of overall strategy use.

Besides, those learners combined many strategy categories together. Chamot and Kupper (1989), for instance, point out that successful language learners select

strategies which are consistent with one another and with the requirements of the language task. Those learners can identify the strategies they use and state the reason why they use them (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, cited in Aslan, 2009, p. 52).

Language performance of the learners was tested in many different ways in relation to strategy use in several studies as language proficiency and achievement tests (Phillips, 1990), entrance and placement examinations (Mullins, 1992), self-ratings of proficiency (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989), language course grades (Mullins, 1992), and years of language study (Watanabe, 1990). Using such a wide variety of means, researchers pursue the link between success in target language and strategy use (cited in *ibid*).

O'Malley et al (1985) found that learners at all levels reported the use of a great variety of learning strategies. High-achieving students reported greater use of meta-cognitive strategies. They concluded that the more successful students are probably able to use greater meta-cognitive control over their learning (*ibid*).

Ehrman and Oxford (1995) indicated that successful students preferred to use cognitive strategies more frequently in their study (*ibid*). Green and Oxford (1995) discovered that high-achieving students used all kinds of language learning strategies more frequently than low-achieving students (*ibid*).

### **1.6.2. Language Learning Strategies and Gender**

The first study which will be mentioned in this section was done by Green and Oxford (1995), which is a large scale study including 374 participants conducted to find out language learning strategy use by students at three different course levels at the University of Puerto Rico. It relates strategy use to gender as well as to second language proficiency level and includes analysis of variation in the use of individual strategies on the SILL. They found greater use of learning strategies among more successful learners and that females used much more strategies than men. What they also found was that with both proficiency level and gender, only some items showed significant variation and significant variation by proficiency level did not invariably mean more frequent strategy use by more successful students. The strategies used frequently or moderately frequently by successful and unsuccessful learners alike are not necessarily unproductive. According to the authors, a more likely interpretation is

that these are “bedrock strategies”, which contribute significantly to the learning process of the more successful students, although not being in themselves sufficient to move the less successful students to higher proficiency levels (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, cited in Aslan, 2009, p. 55).

Another study by Kaylani (1996), conducted in Jordan, investigated the influence of gender and motivation on EFL learning strategy use. Kaylani's starting point was that there is evidence from a number of studies conducted across different cultures around the world that there are differences between male and female students of foreign and second languages as regards what strategies they use and how they use them when engaging in language learning tasks. What she wanted to know was why these differences existed, what their effect on teaching is, and what similarities exist between successful male and female students. She was also interested in the relationship between motivation and strategy use, and as regards gender, what social factors affecting motivation exist which are distinct to male and female students. A sample of 255 students from two boys' and two girls' secondary schools were administered a version of Oxford's (1990) SILL translated into Arabic. A statistical analysis of questionnaire data revealed, among other things, that although there was a higher incidence of memory, cognitive, compensation and affective strategies among female students, the relatively proficient/relatively non-proficient and successful/unsuccessful distinctions correlated more to strategy use than the male/female distinction (ibid, p. 54).

In another study, Sy (1994) discovered that students of English in the Republic of China showed significant gender differences on the SILL. In that study, females significantly surpassed males in their use of cognitive, compensation, meta-cognitive, and social strategies (ibid, p. 56).

Even though most of the studies in this area reported a greater use of language learning strategies by women, Tran (1988) found that Vietnamese women use much fewer language learning strategies (ibid).

In conclusion, the results reached from the previous studies are still not definitive. Because gender depends on many variables such as biological factors, cultural and social elements etc. Besides, along with gender, there are various other factors that



also affect the process of language acquisition; namely, motivation, attitude, nationality (see 1.5). In this study, it is intended to detect the cohesion of gender, language learning strategies and achievement in foreign language learning.

### **1.7. Assessment Tools for Language Learning Strategy Use**

Over the past four decades, researchers on the field of language learning strategies have used a number of methods for assessing learning strategies use among language learners. These methods varies from questionnaires to computer tracking. The reason behind employing different data collection techniques is that the identification of each type of strategy requires a different assessment technique. Therefore, researchers must pay attention while designing the data collection methodology of their studies (Jhaish, 2009, p. 64).

As discussed earlier (see 1.2), the most of learning strategies are unobservable; however, some of them may be related to an observable behavior. In almost all learning contexts, the only way to figure out whether students are using learning strategies while involved in a language task (mental processing) is to ask them; in fact, verbal report may be inaccurate if the learner does not report truthfully. In the same line of thought Grenfell and Harris (1999) state: "[...] it is not easy to get inside the 'black box' of the human brain and find out what is going on there. We work with what we can get, which, despite the limitations, provides food for thought [...]" ( cited in Jhaish, 2009, p. 64).

In addition, self-report data are used to identify language learning strategies use because observation does not pickup mental processes. Researchers have asked language learners to describe their learning processes and strategies through interviews, questionnaires, written diaries and journals, and think-aloud protocols. Each of these methods has limitations, but each provides important insights into unobservable mental learning strategies (Cohen, 1998).

### 1.7.1. Observation

Planning an observational study is a very important process, and the teachers need to consider a variety of factors. These include, for instance, learning strategies the teacher wants to focus on, the number of the learners they want to observe, the length of observations, and the way to collect and analyze the obtained data. According to Cohen (1998), a major challenge for teachers in attempting to apply observational techniques to language learners is that many of the learning strategies cannot be observed by the teacher. These strategies are mentalistic and not behavioristic (e.g., associating /elaborating, using imaginary, guessing intelligently) (Cohen, 1998, pp. 30-31). On the other hand, learning strategies like asking for clarification or verification, and overcoming limitations in speaking through gestures, e.g., are directly observable, so that the teachers can collect information about how learners go about language learning without any troubles.

Oxford (1990) suggests that there is a possibility to use either published and readily available observation forms or self-made forms that the teacher creates by making a list of the strategies they think are important to observe. On this observation form the strategies can be recorded in the following way: by taking notes, by checking off the strategies the teacher sees in a certain period of time or by combining these two approaches. In addition, Oxford (1990) and Cohen (1998) find videotaped and audio taped data regarding observation valuable, since they provide a permanent record of what happened and they can also see some moments that might have not been noticed on the first sight (cited in Blazkova, 2011, p. 28).

### 1.7.2. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are another widely used research method that provides a systematic way of collecting information on the learning strategies use. When using a questionnaire as a means of assessment instrument, the learners have enough time to assess the information and they can reflect on what they usually do in a given situation.

According to Chamot et al. (1999), questionnaire items can be open-ended and closed. Open-ended questionnaires allow learners a broader response range. Cohen (1998) states that unstructured questions simply ask the learners to express their

opinion in a certain area of interest. It is only up to learner's discretion what extent and depth of answers will be used. Thus, the learners have the possibility to respond with only a minimal guidance from the teacher. In semi-structured questionnaires there is most likely a prompt which requests certain information, but the exact shape of this information is not given. It is mainly up to learners to give any description they wish (cited in Blazkova, 2011, p. 30).

On the other hand, as Chamot et al.(1999) state that closed questionnaires provide learners with a response range in the form of a scale (e. g., never, sometimes, always; 1, 2, 3; useful, not useful) or ask for yes-no type responses. This type of questionnaire is used if specific information is to be collected. Cohen (1998) adds that in highly structured questionnaires, the researcher has a specific set of questions that are to be answered by the learner in a set order. In this case, the teacher has a complete control over the questioning. Written questionnaires are usually administered to large groups of learners (cited in *ibid*).

### **1.7.3. Interviews**

A third way of collecting data regarding learning strategies is interviews. Their types range from unstructured to structured interviews. Since there is no particular questioning technique in unstructured interviews the data obtained from such an interview is difficult to interpret and categorize. Whereas the data gathered from a structured interview are “uniformly organized for all respondents and lend themselves to statistical analysis” (Cohen and Scott, 1996). O'Malley, Chamot and their colleagues (1985), have developed a Student Interview Guide, which asks learners to think about what they generally do when faced with a similar language task. Students are not required to do the task during the interview but they are asked to think about how they typically handle or do the task (O'Malley et al, 1985). Oxford (1990) also adds that “such interviews work well in small groups or with individuals” (cited in Jhaish, 2009, p. 67).

### **1.7.4. Diary Writing**

Another way of collecting data concerning learning strategies is diary writing. It is a way of reporting the thoughts, feelings, achievements, and problems the learners report as well as their notions of teachers, friends or native speakers. Diaries are self-

reports that are usually subjective. Oxford (1990) asserts that sometimes diary writing may require some training on the part of the learners since they may not know what to report, how to report it, and to what extent to report it. If a researcher is planning to read students' diaries s/he should inform learners in advance since they are mostly considered private. Some teachers have used diaries as a stimulus to class discussions of strategy use (Jhaish, 2009).

### **1.7.5. Think Aloud Protocols**

Think aloud protocols are obtained by having participants report verbally what their thoughts are while performing a task. However, they are not expected to analyze their behavior as in introspection (Cohen, 1987). Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) refer to the think aloud protocols as “a maturing methodology with much interesting work already accomplished and considerable work to be done” (cited in Cohen, 1996, p. 1), which implies that they have been used in many recent studies and they will be used in studies that will be carried out in the future.

As the other data collection methods, the think aloud protocols have their potential strengths and weaknesses as well, for obtaining data about the otherwise unseen, unobservable processes, such as inferencing or the use of prior knowledge.

Another strength of the method is that it is the closest way to get to the cognitive processes of learners. Nevertheless, only the conscious processes are available for verbalization, the rest of the unconscious thoughts flowing in the mind might remain hidden. Another weakness of the method is that the “respondents may differ with respect to their verbal skills” (Cohen and Scott, 1996, p. 97). Some might be more competent than the others at contributing the appropriate amount of data at the appropriate level of explicitness. When all the points regarding think aloud protocols are taken into consideration, it can be stated that they require careful setting up and preparation on the part of the researcher. An important issue that needs to be taken into account is training participants with respect to the purpose of the study.

As suggested by Cohen and Scott (1996), some aspects should be taken into consideration while selecting the data collection method(s). According to them in order to identify the most appropriate data collection method, a researcher should

respect subjects such as “the purpose of the study, the number of learners and researchers, the resources available, the strategies to be studied, the types of the language tasks for which the strategies are used, and the context in which the language learning takes place” (cited in Jhaish, 2009, p.69).

### **1.8. Conclusion**

The theoretical part of this dissertation is created to provide the base for our research dealing with the issue of language learning strategies in the process of English language learning. Despite, the process of establishing definitions for language learning strategies remains no consensus; in this study, LLS are considered as conscious behaviours or thought processes used in performing learning actions, whether observable (behaviors or techniques) or unobservable (thoughts or mental processes), or both. Concerning language learning strategy classification systems, they are also variedly suggested. This is because of the classification standards which are derived from researchers’ individual differences; i.e., their personal experiences, their own investigations, or their reviews of other researchers’ theories. Regarding our research, Oxford’s classifications is crucial.

In the review of related literature and research on language learning strategies, researchers investigated differences in language learning strategies depending on 1) demographic factors addressing different settings and target populations; 2) methods of data collection; and 3) other related variables such as gender, motivation, proficiency/ achievement, learners’ beliefs, career interests, different teaching and learning conditions/atmospheres and previous language learning experiences. Most of the Literature review pointed out that investigations with language learners frequently indicated that the most successful students tend to use learning strategies that are suitable to the task , material and needs.

It is clear, from reviewing the literature, that the most often tested variable is gender and how it affects strategy use. Actually, gender was tested as a second independent variable in most of the studies mentioned in the literature and has so much attention in the field of strategy research. As mentioned in the literature review, there

were few research done to assess language learning strategies use, and to investigate the relationship between LLS use, gender, and the academic achievement of the Arab EFL learners. Although, there was a consensus among the studies reviewed in this chapter, it is agreed that LLS use have a positive effect on academic achievement.

## **2.1. Introduction**

This research work aims at assessing the language learning strategy use among first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara. For this purpose, it is useful to present the educational context in which our targeted students develop starting from a general overview of ELT in the Algerian educational system to a more specific one dealing with the instruction received by our learners at the university.

Besides, the purpose of this chapter is to deal with the implementation of the research project. It is aimed to present the research design and data collection procedures. First, it highlights the research questions, describes the instruments used and gives the profile of the subjects in question.

The research questions have been translated into two different analytical tools: the first one is a questionnaire addressed to first-year EFL university students and the second one interviews addressed to both university teachers and first-year EFL students. The methodology of each is described in the present chapter. Then, the data had been collected by questionnaires distribution and conducting interviews. After that it comes the phase of coding the questionnaires. Results of the investigative study would serve as groundwork for alternative remedies that will be dealt with in the last chapter.

## **2.2. Status of English Language in Algeria**

Before exposing different issues about the English language in Algeria, we should first analyze the sociolinguistic situation in the country in order to understand the status of the English language in that social environment. Since the current research work is concerned with learning English as a foreign language, the researcher attempts to investigate how and at which level English is taught in Algeria. The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is very rich and complex too because there are different languages used in the Algerian society. First of all, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the official language of Algeria. It is a standard language with its grammar rules and dictionary. It is perceived as the language used in administrative papers and it is

considered as a medium of instruction at the institutional education (especially the first stages).

Then, the Algerian Arabic which refers to the dialects used for daily communication. It is a non-standard language since it has no written form, no grammatical rules, no dictionary, and it is not official. Furthermore, we find the Tamazight (a language used by a group of people called the "Amazigh") which started to be taught at schools, and it has a national status. In addition, French is considered as a second language, which is actually taught at the 3<sup>rd</sup> year primary school and it influenced the Algerians daily communication because of colonial reasons. However, English is considered as a foreign language as stated by Al-Khatib (2008):

"The status of English in Algeria is almost the same as that in the other countries of the world where English is regarded as a foreign language. Also, it is worth noting that despite the hegemonic and imperialistic nature of English worldwide, it is still badly needed in Algeria for the purposes of communicating with the outside world, education, acquisition of knowledge, and development at large"

(Al-Khatib, 2008, cited in Benmostefa, 2013, p. 104)

Therefore, there was an attempt to teach English as a first foreign language (FL1) in the fourth year of the primary school in place of French. However, this attempt ended in failure because neither the sociolinguistic background, nor the human or material resources were available for the success of this. English was taught at the 2<sup>nd</sup> year middle school (after seven years of schooling). Hence, it is not taught at the primary level, but it starts to be taught at the 1<sup>st</sup> year middle school (after five years of schooling).

### **2.3. The Algerian Educational System: An Overview**

After the independency, the principal concern of the national development was education. The Algerian pre-university educational system consisted of two levels: primary and secondary schools. At that time, French dominated as the language of instruction (colonialism's educational heritage) while English was taught in the third year of secondary school.



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In the 1970's, the government started the fundamental school which insured the standard norm of nine year schooling (six years in primary school and three years in middle school). The objective of the fundamental school was to promote the spiritual elements of socialism by teaching the child economics and social sciences based on Arab-Islamic sources and values (Bouyakoub, 2011). However, the extremely large quantity of knowledge given and the study of empirical sciences goes beyond the child's abilities who rather needs at this stage to acquire the basic skills of a language. This system is more probably to hinder the child's normal learning process.

Since then, the Algerian school went through a number of reforms. In the early seventies, the authorities committed in the process of "Arabization". The purpose of this process was to increase the use of Standard Arabic (SA) replacing French.

In the same vain Al-Khatib states:

"At present, however, the case has been changed, as the French language is now replaced by Arabic in all public schools and indigenous history and culture are excluded from the curricula. Arabization continues its spread into society at large."

(Al-Khatib,2008, p. 2)

The "Arabization" reform started in the lower levels of education to be lengthened, later in the eighties, to higher education. Yet, it should be mentioned that this process was introduced without effective preparation: lack of teacher training, lack of teaching materials and resources for learners (Bouyakoub, 2011).

Furthermore, the supremacy of instruction through MSA and the limited teaching time allocated to French and English language teaching led the younger generations to encounter serious learning problems in both foreign languages. The thing that we can clearly notice at the university level, where a remarkable number of bachelors exhibit insufficiencies in both speaking and writing.

Algeria has carried on and reinforced the teaching of foreign languages. As mentioned earlier, French was still taught as a second language and used in daily life communication. While Spanish, German and English were taught as foreign languages with no difference in status. However, English has become an international language, and the most studied language in the world. Nowadays, English is one of the most

important languages of communication; it provides information in different fields, i.e., business and technology. In this sense Al-khatib (2008, p. 2) argues: "Moreover, a competition between English and French in these countries began to take place in a later stage".

In the light of the globalization process, students who become fluent in English are believed to be able to contribute to the development of their country. For such reasons, the Algerian authorities have proceeded to reform the existing educational policies to cope with the new world requirements. Therefore, much importance has been given to the teaching of EFL, and thus English has become a compulsory subject matter in the curriculum all over the country. In fact Benmostefa states that:

"This explicit recognition of English as global language has led key stakeholders including policy-makers, textbook writers and teachers to reconsider the teaching of English at the different levels of education, middle, secondary and tertiary. Needless to recall, English is undisputedly the first genuinely global language of world communication. It is the main language of the world of diplomacy and business negotiations. It is the language of scientific and technological literature. Knowing English makes such access possible."

(Benmostefa, 2013, pp. 101-102)

As a conclusion, Arabic has been established since the 1970s, while French has been ranked at the second position as a first foreign language; regardless its wide use in everyday life and in higher education. As a consequence, English has been considered as a second foreign language. It is taught along the four years of Middle school and in the three years of the secondary school. Thus, by the end of secondary education, the learners will have accumulated seven years of experience in EFL.

#### **2.4. ELT at University**

Concerning English language teaching at university, the learning conditions offered to EFL students do not aim at promoting any achievement in language learning because of the lack of appropriate equipment. Large classes with mixed abilities is

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another problem in our universities, students have small opportunities for self-expression or individual help on the part of the teacher.

Another important aspect is that students' contact with the English language is limited in time and it is not used outside the language classroom, regarding the teacher as the only source of instruction in the target language. Outside the classroom, English is a foreign language with no use in the community, unlike French. Therefore, students seem to have negative attitudes towards this language as they are unconscious of its importance for their future studies. As a result, these students have a low proficiency level in English language.

At their entrance to university, students will have accumulated an English learning experience of seven years, during which they have been exposed to a rich program. Unfortunately, most Algerian learners show little competence in English compared to the amount of instruction they have had. They are mainly weak at productive skills. These students perceive English to be a difficult subject-matter. An alarming situation appeals for careful thinking and investigation about the source of the low achievement problem so as to arrive at satisfactory solutions.

As in most countries of the world, Algeria launched reforms of its system of higher education in order to meet new requirements imposed by globalization and by American educational standards. The passage from the old (classic) system; e.g. four-years degree, magister of two-years and four-years PhD; to the new system is a necessity because the old system "has failed to the challenges imposed by the evolution of the economics, political and social situation (Sarnou et al., 2012). In fact, the evolution of the situation of the economic and political life of the country has led policymakers to rethink about the educational system of the country who seek to follow the development of the labour market. Now, the LMD system is designed to ensure easy mobility of students. The LMD system is also part of a logic of competition between institutions of higher education, especially in the developed countries.

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The implementation of this reform in Algeria seeks, essentially, to create competitive institutions that are measured to cope with the needs required by the labour market and also offer adequate skills adapted to changes in the national and international environment. Thus, it was generally agreed among educators that "there was a serious disagreement between social requirements, to the demands of the labour market and skills which produces the University" (Sarnou et al, 2012).

Indeed, the Ministry of higher education and scientific research in Algeria is trying to deepen the LMD reforms, particularly by greater involvement of the administration and teachers and rehabilitation programs. For instance, by new guidelines on PhD training and an important material and intangible investment. It is to recalled the large number of educational structure completed in recent years, the hardware currently available to universities as well as the documentary set in service of students and teachers. Without forgetting the data base online SNDL. Unfortunately, the major drawback to the success of the reform is the big number of students. The LMD system is suitable for special education and little to mass education.

The present reform hopes to achieve the following objectives: (1) the improvement of university education, (2) the adequacy between education and the needs of the labour market and (3) the development of the academic training, professional (Megnounif, 2008).

### **2.5. The English Language Department: A Brief Overview**

The present investigation has been carried out at the Department of English Language at the University of Mascara. At the department, the first two academic years are basically devoted to grammar, written expression, and oral expression ; the program also offers courses in linguistics, literature and civilization. In addition, research methodology course is offered and devoted to research techniques for the sake of preparing students for empirical research. However, it should also be noted that the number of students at the English department is witnessing a continuous rise. The table below serves a best illustration of this phenomenon.

Table 2.1. Number of First-Year LMD Students from 2014 to 2017

Accademic Year	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Number of Students	349	418	555

Department of English, the University of Mascara.

The noticeable rise in the number of the students choosing English language studies, especially at the undergraduate level, largely explains the popularity of English language among today's generation.

### 2.5.1. First-Year LMD Students

Since the current study has involved a sample population from the first year LMD students. It is necessary to provide the total number of students at this level. Like many other Foreign languages Departments in Algeria, the total number of female students out numbers than of male students. The table below gives the total number of students and shows the proportion of both male and female students:

Table 2.2. Number of First-Year LMD Students

Gender	Number
Male	127
Female	291
Total	418

Department of English, Mascara University.

### 2.5.2. The Curriculum

The curriculum at university level is more flexible, it provides only general guidelines for each modular course and it is up to teachers to collectively or individually design the content of the course. In fact, it is worth noting that at university settings there is a shift from the communicative language teaching approach to what is so called “the heuristic approach”. This implies that both material selection and skilled teaching are of paramount importance for a successful and fruitful

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literature instruction. The table below shows the different modular courses offered by the English Language Department for the first year LMD students.

Table 2.3. Official Curriculum of the First-Year LMD Students

Modules	Teaching Time per Week
Grammar	3hrs
Phonetics	1h30
Introduction to Linguistics	1h30
Reading Comprehension & Written Expression	4hs30
Research Methodology	1h30
Arabic Language	1h30
Introduction to the English & Culture Civilization	1h30
Introduction to the Literary Texts	1h30
Listening Comprehension & Oral Expression	3hs
Social Sciences & Humanities	1h30
Total	21hs

Department of English, the University of Mascara.

### 2.6. Action Research in TEFL

An action research is a reflective process that leads the researcher to discover solutions to a problem or to conduct exploration to a given situation. In other words, Brown and Rodgers (2004) define research as an exploration of experience of one kind or another, sometimes formal and technical, but not necessarily so. They add that the good way of understanding the nature of research is to first experience it by doing it, initially in a simple and elementary way. Accordingly, Ourghi (2002) states that: “an excellent reflective means of investigating a specific aspect of the teaching process and learning outcome” (cited in Djebbari, 2009). In the same sense McNiff and Whitehead

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(2002) consider action research as common-sense approach to personal and professional development that enables practitioners everywhere to investigate and evaluate their work, and to create their own theories of practice (cited in Djebbari, 2009).

As reported in Brown (1992, cited in Brown and Rodgers, 2004), during 1991, the TESOL research Task Force formed by the executive board of TESOL (an ESL/EFL teacher organization called Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) sent out a questionnaire to 1000 TESOL members randomly selected from the General Membership of TESOL, and 200 each from four interest sections: Applied Linguistics, Higher Education, Research, and Teacher Education. One question on the questionnaire was: How would you define research?. We wrote in bold the definitions that seem to us more related with the case of this dissertation.

Some of respondents defined research as follows:

- **Finding the source or cause of something.**
- **It is peeling away the layers of onion so as to see how and why something works or doesn't work or where it fits in the grander scheme with increased understanding.**
- Investigation into how and why things work or don't work.
- **Finding answers to questions.**
- Exploring the mundane to find new depths and connections.
- Discovery of new knowledge.
- **Controlled investigation of a theory.**
- Careful, thorough study.
- **Rigorous inquiry into theoretical or practical issues.**
- The necessary underpinnings to advancement of the profession--without it, you are in danger of uttering unsubstantiated jabberwocky and not doing our students justice.
- **The search of the truth.**
- **Use of scientific method to test a theory.**

- **Working consciously and critically (but not necessarily objectively) at important problems in human endeavor.**

## **2.7. Presentation of the Purpose of the Study and Hypotheses**

In experimental research, you can use research questions and/or research hypotheses. In other words, the central issues of your research can be posited as RESEARCH QUESTIONS, which are questions that you will try to answer in the study, or the issues can be posited as RESEARCH HYPOTHESES, which are *claims* that you believe the experimental study might support (or perhaps disprove) (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p. 215).

As mentioned in the first chapter, it is significant that LLS help students to become more effective and autonomous. Considering the research as an investigating of specific aspect of students' learning process and refer to the results of the survey mentioned above; we can determine the main objective of our research as follows: know what language learning strategies do the first year EFL students use in their learning and how frequently do they use it. The research tries to answer the following questions:

1. What are the language-learning strategies used by the first year EFL students at the University of Mascara as reported in the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)?
2. Is there a difference in the students' language learning strategy use regarding gender?
3. Is there a difference in the students' language learning strategy use regarding their academic achievement?

The purpose of this study is to assess the language learning strategies that learners use, and to reveal whether there is a relationship among language learning strategies and the academic achievement among the first year EFL students at the University of Mascara. In addition, this study aims at finding out whether there are significant differences in the language learning strategy use regarding students' gender.



The research was conducted in the English Department of the Faculty of letters and languages at the University of Mascara. The choice of this Department was motivated by the fact that the researcher completed her graduation studies there. She has not encountered any problems in getting permission to distribute the questionnaires and doing the interviews. First-year EFL students constitute our case study. We remind that from methodological perspective, the case study is used in several disciplines such as medicine, sociology, economics, management, and, indeed, linguistics. From Etymological point of view, the word `case` is related to the word `chance` (Brown and Rodgers, 2004). In this sense, chance is involved in what we will find and what the relevance of the findings might be. In this perspective we have developed the following hypothesis that we have tried to check throughout the chapter three.

➤ **Use of Language Learning Strategies**

H1<sub>0</sub>: First-year EFL students at the University of Mascara do not use Language Learning Strategies as reported in SILL.

H1<sub>1</sub>: First-year EFL students at the University of Mascara use different Language Learning Strategies as reported in SILL.

➤ **Differences in Language Learning Strategies Use and Students Gender**

H2<sub>0</sub>: There are no differences in the use of LLS between male and female of first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara.

H2<sub>1</sub>: There are differences in the use of LLS between male and female of first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara.

➤ **Differences in Language Learning Strategies Use and Students Academic Achievement**

H3<sub>0</sub>: there are no differences in the use of LLS at the three levels of academic achievement of first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara.

H3<sub>1</sub>: there are differences in the use of LLS at the three levels of academic achievement of first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara.

## **2.8. Presentation of the Research Instruments**

When we use the term evaluation we are not referring exclusively to testing but also we are referring to assessing. More specifically, we mean "the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of a curriculum and assess its effectiveness and efficiency as well as the participants' attitudes within the context of the particular institutions involved" (Brown, 1989, p. 223). According to Brown (1997), surveys –including interviews and questionnaires are most often used in Language education for research. In this present research, we chose three instruments for data collection: (1) questionnaire administered to students, (2) interviews with teachers and students, and (3) academic results provided by the administration.

### **2.8.1. The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning**

In general, to find out what learning strategies students use to learn English, the researcher has several possibilities. He can choose an appropriate assessment method, as shown in the first chapter. In such research, the number of students who were to be the subject of study must be significant. It is for this reason that we considered that the most appropriate assessment instrument is the questionnaire. So we will focus on a questionnaire designed to assess the students' use of language learning strategies.

The difficult task that remains is to make the design of the questionnaire and what questions should be included. We decided after consultation of the literature that it is preferable to use a scale developed by other researchers. Indeed, the questionnaire designed by Oxford (1990), called Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, Version 7.0) (Appendix C), form a measurement scale adapted to the objective of our research. This questionnaire is well structured and developed a number of items that facilitate the assessment of learning strategies used by the students.

The SILL will allow us to control the investigation. The language used in the SILL is very simplified, and take about 35 minutes to respond it. The SILL is highlighted here because it is the most widely used language learning strategy assessment instrument. This questionnaire is currently used in at least 17 languages and in more

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than 15 studies involving EFL/ESL learners from many countries and cultural backgrounds, such as Hispanic, Egyptian, Jordanian, Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean (Oxford, 1996), and its reliability and validity have been widely documented (Oxford, 1992).

Furthermore, the SILL has been administered to between 9,000 and 10,000 students worldwide; it has resulted in more than 40 dissertations, theses, and other major studies; and it is the basis of dozens of research articles published in refereed journals. The SILL has two forms: a 50-item questionnaire for people learning English as a second or foreign language and an 80-item questionnaire for native English speakers learning other languages (Oxford, 1999).

An Arabic translation version of Oxford's (1990) SILL (Version 7.0 for ESL/EFL students) was used to assess strategy use (Ahmed Ismail & Al Khatib, 2013) (Appendix D). This 50-item taxonomy covers six broad categories, each represented by a number of individual strategies (items): Memory strategies (items 1–9), Cognitive strategies (items 10–23), Compensatory strategies (items 24–29), Meta-cognitive strategies (items 30–38) and Affective strategies (items 39–44), Social strategies (items 45–50).

Likert scales are generally useful for getting at respondents views, judgments, or opinions about almost any aspect of language learning (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p. 120). The SILL is organized on a 1 to 5 scale, from Never or almost never true of me to Always or almost always true of me.

For the statistical analysis of the data the raw scores were entered into IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Programs (SPSS) for Windows version 22, (Tabeti, Benmoustefa, 2016). Then, the data were analyzed by using several statistics tools - frequencies, means, standard deviations, Cronbach alpha, Pearson correlation, independent samples of t-test and One-way ANOVA.

In this way, descriptive statistics are used to characterize or describe a set of numbers in terms of central tendency and to show how the numbers disperse, or vary, around the center (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p. 122). The table below shows some items from the SILL:

Table 2.4. Examples of Items Used in the Study

Categories of strategies	Examples of items
Memory strategies	- <i>I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.</i>
Cognitive strategies	- <i>I watch English language TV shows or go to movies spoken in English</i>
Compensation strategies	- <i>If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same</i>
Meta-cognitive strategies	- <i>I pay attention when someone is speaking English.</i>
Affective strategies	- <i>I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making mistakes.</i>
Social strategies	- <i>I practice English with other students</i>

To ensure that first-year students won't find difficulties in understanding the SILL items, we adopted a better translation for seven items. The table below shows the original items and the changes made on each item:

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Table 2.5. Changes Adopted in the Arabic Translated Version of the SILL

New Item	Original Item
أربط بين ما أعرفه و بين المعلومات الجديدة التي أتعلمها في الإنجليزية.	1. أفكر في العلاقات بين ما أعرفه أصلا و الأمور الجديدة التي أتعلمها في الانجليزية
أستخدم الإيقاع لتذكر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.	5.أستخدم الوقع الموسيقي لتذكر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.
أحرص على مشاهدة البرامج التلفزيونية و الأفلام السينمائية الناطقة بالإنجليزية.	15.أشاهد البرامج التلفزيونية أو أذهب لمشاهدة الأفلام السينمائية الناطقة بالإنجليزية
أحاول فهم الكلمات الإنجليزية التي لا أعرفها عن طريق توقع معانيها.	24.أحاول فهم الكلمات الإنجليزية التي لا أعرفها عن طريق تخمين معانيها.
عندما لا أجد الكلمات المناسبة أثناء التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية أعبر عنها بالإشارة.	25.عندما لا أجد الكلمات المناسبة أثناء التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية أستعيز عنها بالإشارة.
أستطيع ملاحظة التوتر الذي يصيبني أثناء دراستي و استخدامي للغة الإنجليزية.	42.أدرك إن أصابني التوتر خلال دراستي أو استخدامي للغة الإنجليزية.
أمارس اللغة الإنجليزية مع الطلاب الآخرين.	47.أمارس اللغة الإنجليزية مع طلاب الآخرين.
أحاول أن أتعلم عن ثقافة الناطقين الأصليين باللغة الإنجليزية (Native speakers culture).	50.أحاول أن أتعلم عن ثقافة الناطقين الأصليين باللغة الإنجليزية.

### 2.8.2. The Interviews

Interviews are typically made up of fairly open-ended questions or planned in what is called an interview schedule. Interviews are most useful for discovering what the issues are in a particular survey project or even for finding out which questions should be asked (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p. 142).

The interview is the second instrument of data collection that was used. Therefore, two semi-structured interviews were designed, one intended to the students and the other for the first-year EFL teachers. The interview addressed to students is mainly based on (SILL). Now, we want to know what are the obstacles of learning that students face? As such, students are requested to answer 10 open-ended questions.

On its part, the interview reserved for teachers seeks to discover problems that students encounter when they learn English. Indeed, the opinion of teachers is crucial, because it is based on their own observation and interaction with the students. Teachers are able also to tell us about the progress in learning of students and their preferences in matters of learning strategies.

### **2.8.3. Grades Provided by the Administration**

The assessment of strategies used for the learning of English as a foreign language is not useful if it is not connected to the students' proficiency level. According to the literature it is possible to determine students' proficiency in two main ways: the use of tests or the use of marks obtained by the students during the academic year. This second technique is rather objective because it is based on the objective evaluation of teachers throughout the academic year. The first technique is also objective but it needs a lot of investment in time and more availability of both administration and students, thing which is difficult to obtain in the end of the academic year. The statistical analysis of our study uses the students' grades which are provided by the administration of the English Department.

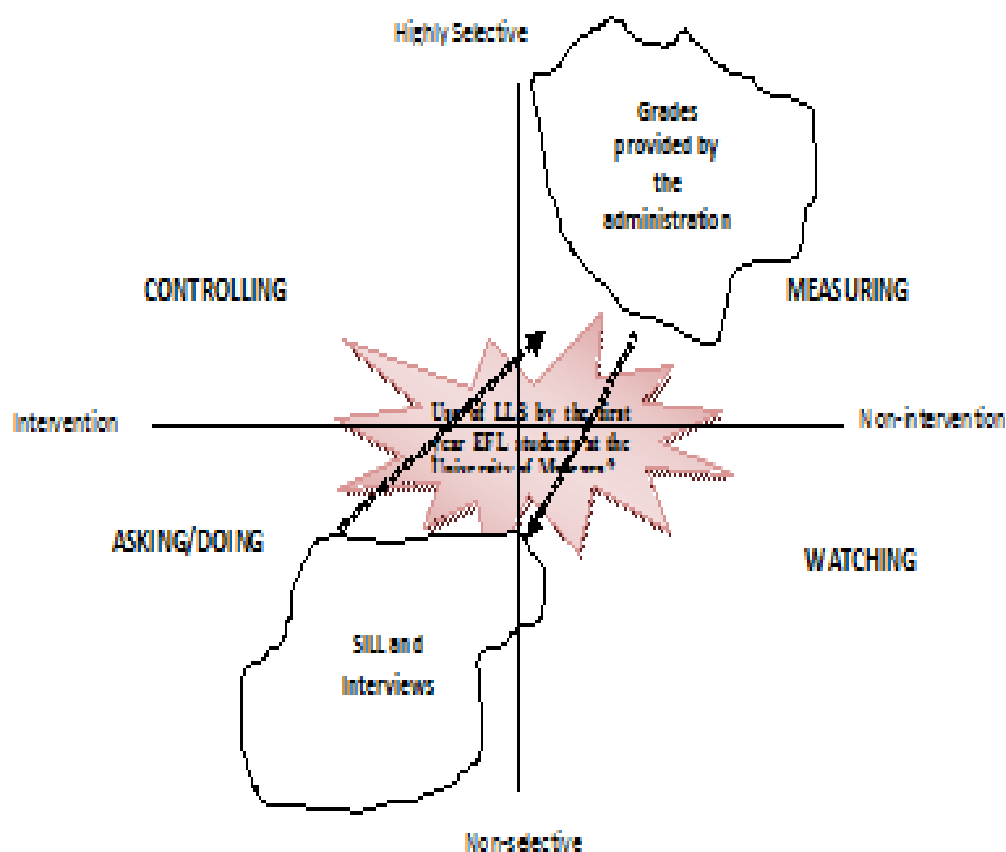
The choice of these three instruments of analysis was justified from methodological point of view in order to be able to respond to the three questions raised earlier in this chapter. These instruments can be reconciled with the taxonomy of educational research design types proposed by (Van Lier, 1988, cited in Brown and Rodgers, 2004, pp. 49-50) in order to determine our methodological positioning. This taxonomy is built around the two axes of *intervention* and *selectivity*. According to Van Lier (1988), research can vary along the axis of intervention from formal laboratory experimentation (high intervention) to informal classroom observation (non-intervention). Also, researchers can be selective in the types of data they want to focus on, or very non-selective, for instance all behavior observed of all participants (ibid).

In the end, we will have four territories of research. For instance, the researcher is in the territory of the *Watching* when his intervention and selectivity are low. However he is under the *measuring* when he is very selective and his intervention is low. The

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instruments adopted in this dissertation can be classified in the territories of the *measuring* and *asking/doing*, because grades obtained from administration of the English Department form a very reliable and credible measurement of students' proficiency level and the questionnaires and the interviews enters the territory of Asking/ Doing, since our intervention is important and the sample is random. The following figure shows clearly the positioning of our research instruments.

Figure 2.1. Parameters of Research Design (Adapted from Van Lier, 1988, cited in Brown and Rodgers, 2004, pp. 49-50)



### 2.8.4. Major Categories of the Target Research

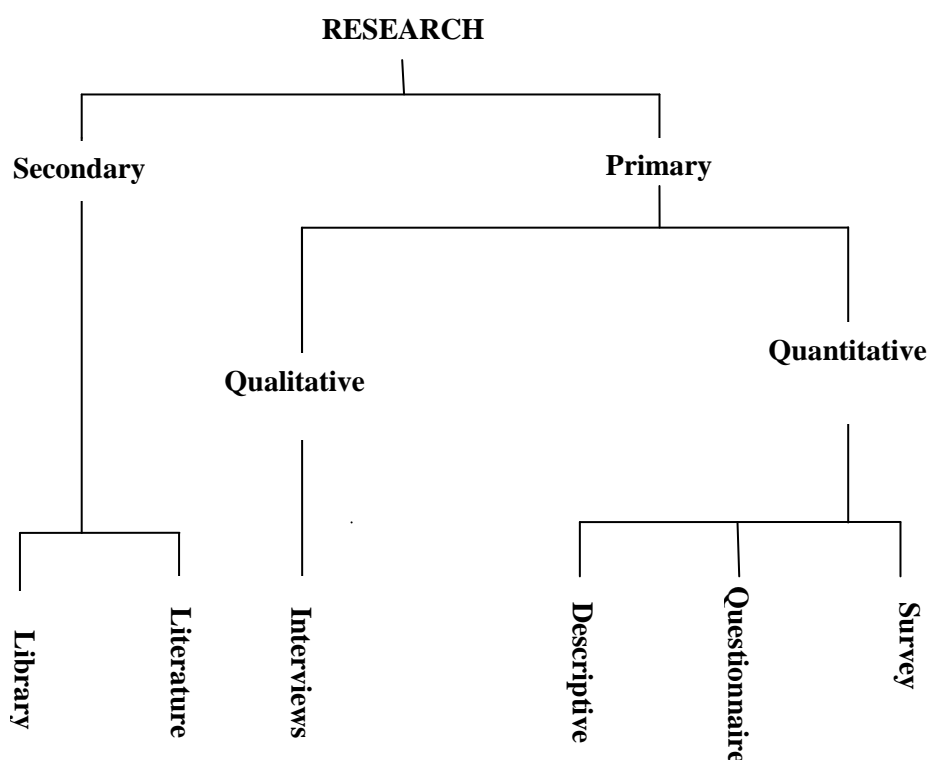
As a synthesis of the main categories of this research, we adopt the classical classification generally referred by language researchers who are the primary research and secondary research (Brown, 2001). Secondary research are constituted by

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information resources regarded as original, such as articles, books, theses, dissertation, reports and all professional or academic scientific production. We used this type of documents, first of all, in the first chapter to develop our literature review, then in the second chapter to put into context our research problem, namely the teaching of English in Algeria and to argue in favor of our methodological choices. These sources are also used to discuss the results obtained in the third chapter, including comparing the results that we have achieved through statistical analysis with other results obtained by other researchers.

Primary research comprises mainly the original data created by the researchers by using different instruments of research, such as achievement tests, classroom observations, questionnaire responses, but also by other original data, like reports and documents of an institution or a company. In this case, primary data are collected by the questionnaire, the interview and the documents granted by the administration of the Department of English. These data types are used and combined in the third chapter. This synthesis is presented in the following figure:

Figure 2.2. Broad Categories Considered in Our Research (Adapted from Brown, 2001)





The SILL is accompanied by a list of instructions for its good use. An inventory of strategies used to learn English is designed to assess how students learn English. The results can help them learn more about themselves as learners. In addition, the results provide their teachers with information how to encourage their students to achieve better results in the learning of English. Basis on this, teachers may decide to plan any training strategy (Oxford, 1990).

We proceed to the distribution of the questionnaires and the realization of interviews with students during one week. This time was needed because the first- year EFL students are divided into 08 groups. We remained that we don't need a pre-test for this questionnaire because it is a measurement scale of high reliability and used in several research as we showed above.

We gave a copy of the questionnaire to each student registered in the official list of the groups, which the administration has given us. We also proceed to the explanation of the purpose of the study and of the questionnaire and the time required for the response. It is noted that students were very motivated to complete the survey, because they consider that the topic interest them.

We asked students to respond to the items of the SILL by a five-level Likert type scale, as follows: (1) Never or almost never true of me, (2) Usually not true of me, (3) Somewhat true of me, (4) Usually true of me and (5) Always or almost always true of me. The students were reminded that they were to answer in terms of how well the statements describe them and that there were no right or wrong answers to these statements.

### **2.9.1. Reliability Test**

The reliability can be defined as: "the degree to which the results of a study are consistent" (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p. 241). The reliability test inform us about the degree to which we can expect consistent results if the data for the study were re-analyzed by another researcher and even if the study was replicated (Brown and Rodgers, 2004). To test the SILL's reliability of the Arabic translation version, we used Cronbach-alpha which was found .904. The following table shows the level of

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reliability of each type of strategy. All scores are higher than 60% which shows the internal consistency of the items.

Table 2.6. Reliability Test

Reliability Measure	Number of items	Cronbach-alpha
Memory strategies	From 1 to 9 (9)	.611
Cognitive strategies	From 10 to 23 (14)	.739
Compensation strategies	From 24 to 29 (6)	.620
Meta-cognitive strategies	From 30 to 38 (9)	.838
Affective strategies	From 39 to 44 (6)	.610
Social strategies	From 45 to 50 (6)	.723
Overall	50	.904

### 2.10. The Sample

We distributed 190 questionnaires on all the students present in 6 of the 8 groups during the last week of April 2016. We want to ensure that the students have completed the program. This is our only guarantee that the grades of the year-end reflect not only their proficiency level but also the program of the first year. It is reported that the groups were chosen randomly.

We have recovered 186 questionnaires of which 10 were not completely filled. After the revision of the grades provided by the administration of the Department, we noticed that 18 respondents are repeaters. These students are automatically excluded from the investigation because they have not the same conditions of English learning of other students. The process of data collection is shown in the table below.

Table 2.7. Process of the Questionnaires Collection

<b>Process of the questionnaires collection</b>	<b>Number of questionnaires</b>
Questionnaires distributed	190
Questionnaires recovered	186
Questionnaires rejected (not totally fulfilled)	10
Questionnaires rejected (repeaters students)	18
Questionnaires considered in the study	n=158

### **2.10.1. Characteristics of the Responders**

The study was conducted with 158 first year EFL students (77.8% female and 22.2% male). Almost 94.3 % of the total numbers of participants were between 17 and 20 years old. 82.9 % of students stated that they enjoy when they learn English, 4.4 % don't enjoy and 12.7% are neutral. The characteristics of our sample are presented in the Table below.

Table 2.8. Demographic Data of Participants

Demographic Data		Frequency	Percent
Age	18 years	44	27,8
	19 years	68	43,0
	20 years	37	23,4
	More than 20 years	9	5,7
Sex	Male	35	22,2
	Female	123	77,8
Branch	Littérature	116	73,4
	Scientific	42	26,6
Enjoyment while learning English	Yes	131	82,9
	No	7	4,4
	Neutre	20	12,7
Academic achievement <sup>1</sup>	Poor	53	33,5
	Medium	90	57,0
	Good	15	9,5

All the subjects had studied English formally for 8 years. Participants completed the SILL in class in 30 minutes under our supervision and under conditions of anonymity and confidentiality. The participants also provided information about their age and gender.

## 2.11. Conclusion

The awareness of the English language importance has largely favored the promotion of ELT in Algeria. This chapter has tried to provide a description and analysis of the teaching/learning situation in Algeria. This description has embraced the early EFL school years of the learner till his admission to university to shed light on his educational background.

Since this research work aims at assessing the language learning strategy use among first year EFL university students, the research design and data collection procedures are presented along with the research questions, the research instruments and the profile of the subjects in question. The next chapter will deal with the results of this investigative study.

<sup>1</sup> The academic achievement is represented by the students' final marks provided by the administration.

### 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter we will report on the results of our practical study that we have achieved in the English Department at the University of Mascara. This chapter is based on action research; it deals with the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. After the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire through SPSS 22, along with analysis of interviews conducted with students and teachers by the manual classification of responses according to the strategies adopted in this study. The results are interpreted via qualitative and quantitative analyses of the gathered information. Finally, the main research results are discussed by making reference to the findings and explaining the degree of evidence of the collected data.

### 3.2. The Overall Use of Learning Strategies as Reported in SILL

In order to test the validity of the null and alternate following hypotheses:

**H<sub>0</sub>: First-year EFL students at the University of Mascara do not use Language Learning Strategies as reported in SILL.**

**H<sub>1</sub>: First-year EFL students at the University of Mascara use different Language Learning Strategies as reported in SILL.**

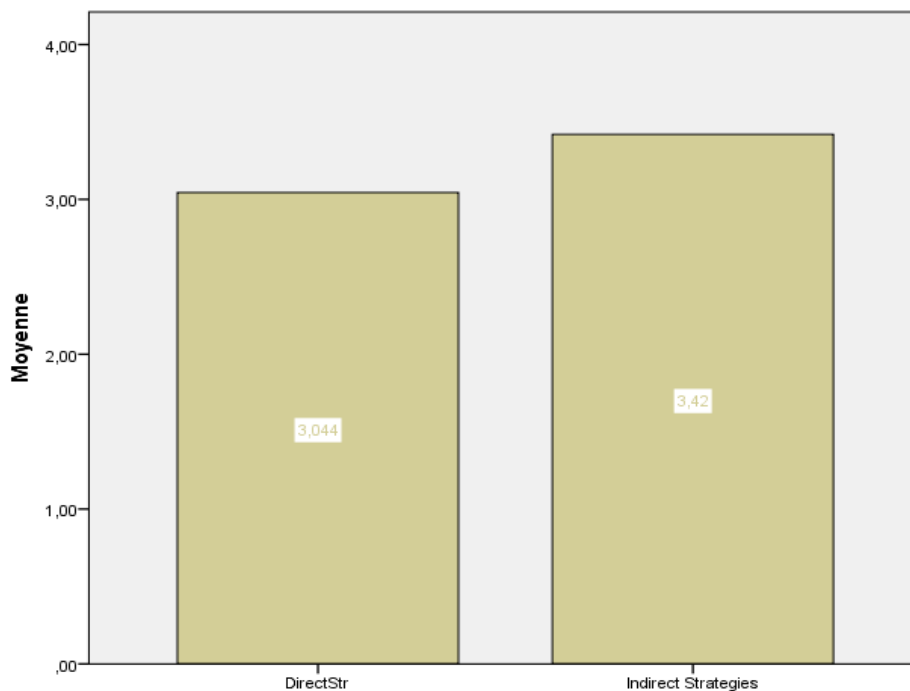
The data from the returned questionnaire in the part of SILL of each student was analyzed based on the six direct and indirect learning strategy types by using descriptive statistics: means and standard deviation. Arithmetic mean in English language learning strategy use was divided into three levels according to Oxford (1990): (1) High (3.5-5.0), (2) Medium (2.5-3.4), and (3) Low (1.0-2.4), as shown in the table below:

Table 3.1. Scale Measurement of the Strategy Use Level

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average</b>
High	Always or almost always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
Low	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
	Never or almost never Used	1.0 to 1.4

It is necessary to mention that the SILL consists of fifty items divided into two main categories and six subcategories. As mentioned in the theoretical part, direct strategies subdivided into memory, cognitive and compensation categories directly involve the target language and require mental processes when learning a new language. Indirect strategies, including meta-cognitive, effective and social categories influence the language learning indirectly.

Chart 3.1. The Average Extent of Using Direct and Indirect Strategies



After analyzing the data collected via the SILL and making the averages of two primary classes of Oxford's classification, it is obvious that there is a difference between using direct and indirect strategies. Although the frequency of using direct strategies is medium (3.04) according to the chart 3.1. On the contrary, the frequency of indirect strategies usage is high; the average frequency is (3.42) as shown in the chart 3.1. More precisely, the analysis showed that the first year students used indirect strategies which are based on social and affective interaction, more than the direct strategies.

The finding stands in contrast with the finding of the previous studies by Khamkhien (2000) cited in Kunasaraphan (2015), who reported that Thai students used direct strategies more than indirect strategies in learning English. Unlike to the results found by Anugakul & Yordchim (2014) cited in Kunasaraphan (2015), who reported that students at international college, Suan Suanandha Rajabhat University used indirect strategies more than direct strategies in learning English, which is consistent with the results that we have found in our research.

In the following part, graphical presentation of the resulting figures of the individual items of the SILL will be realized. The SILL is divided into six parts (1 – 6) which represent six groups of language learning strategies (memory, cognitive, compensation, meta-cognitive, affective and social). Each of these groups will be graphically presented in the above stated order. The overall use of language learning strategies by the students is shown in Table 3.2 .

Table 3.2. Description of Overall Use of Language Learning Strategies

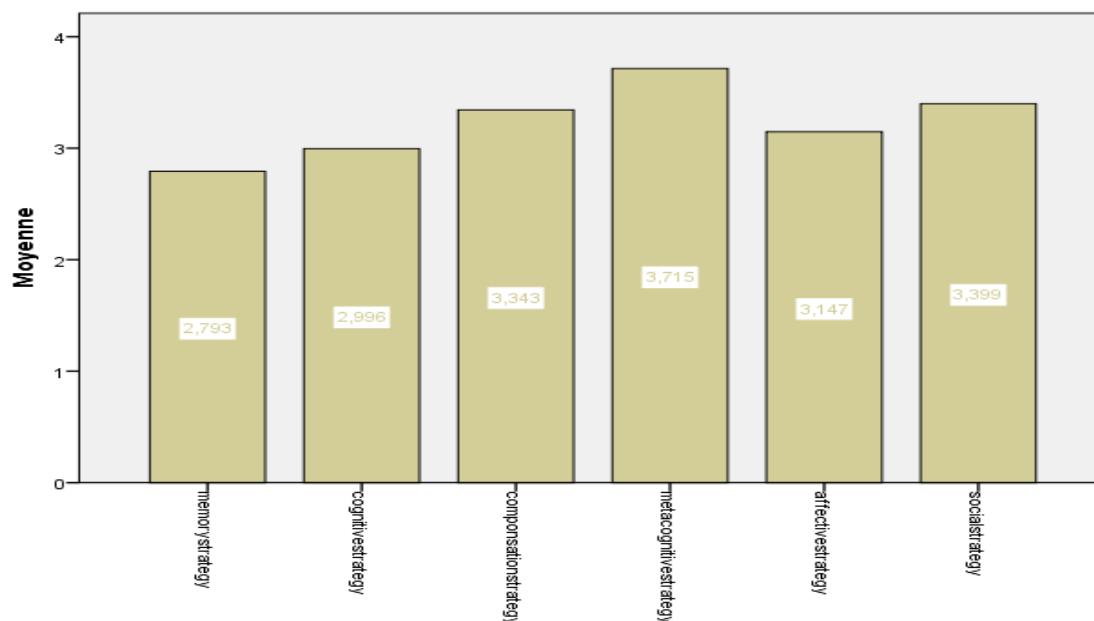
<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Mean (M)</b>	<b>standard deviations (S-D)</b>	<b>Level of strategy use</b>	<b>Use frequency</b>	<b>Rank in the scope</b>
Memory strategies	2.79	.620	Medium	Sometimes used	6
Cognitive strategies	3.00	.561	Medium	Sometimes used	5
Compensation strategies	3.34	.672	Medium	Sometimes used	3
Meta-cognitive strategies	3.72	.715	High	Usually used	1
Affective strategies	3.15	.789	Medium	Sometimes used	4
Social strategies	3.40	.837	Medium	Sometimes used	2
Overall strategies	3.23	.698	Medium	Sometimes used	

This table presents the mean and standard deviation of strategy use among all the subjects. The overall use of LLS by the students was found medium, while the overall mean for the sample was 3.23. These results confirm the validity of the alternate hypothesis with demonstrate the use of LLS (as reported in the SILL) by the first year EFL students.

The average for groups strategy use ranged from a high 3.72 to a low of 2.79. As for strategy categories, meta-cognitive strategies was the most frequently used strategy (M=3.72) and memory strategy was the least frequently used (M=2.79), while between the two in descending order were social strategies (M=3.40), compensation strategies (M= 3.34), affective strategies (M=3.15), and cognitive strategies (M=3.00). This result differs from the results found in other countries. For example, Politzer (1983), cited in Hashemi & Hadavi (2015), has argued that Hispanics use more social strategies while Asians choose memorization strategies. The six strategies are showed in the chart below.



Chart 3.2. The Average Extent of Using the Six Strategies



After having presented and analyzed above importance granted to each strategy according to the perception of the students. We will now present the items dealing with the ten most used strategies by the first year EFL students to achieve their proficiency in language learning.

Table 3.3. Description of Top 10 Used Language Learning Strategies

Rank in LLS	Strategies (Items)	Mean (M)	standard deviations (S-D)	Level of strategy use	Use frequency	Strategy Type
1	Item 32	4.37	.794	High	Usually used	Metacognitive
2	Item 15	4.32	1.023	High	Usually used	Cognitive
3	Item 33	4.16	.970	High	Usually used	Metacognitive
4	Item 31	4.06	.935	High	Usually used	Metacognitive
5	Item 11	4.00	1.016	High	Usually used	Cognitive
6	Item 29	4.00	.931	High	Usually used	Compensation
7	Item 30	3.88	1.024	High	Usually used	Metacognitive
8	Item 12	3.78	1.013	High	Usually used	Cognitive
9	Item 50	3.78	1.254	High	Usually used	Social
10	Item 38	3.77	1.113	High	Usually used	Affective

From the first reading of table 3.3, we note that Metacognitive strategies are represented by four strategies in the top 10 of strategies used by first year EFL students. The second group of strategy which is most represented in the top 10 is the cognitive strategies with three items, two of them are in the top 5. The other three strategies that remain are according to the descending order of importance: compensation strategy (6th position), social strategy (9th position) and emotional strategy (10th position).

### **3.3. The Use of the Six Scope of Learning Strategies**

In order to identify whether language learning strategies are commonly used by first year EFL students including the six learning strategy types, the data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed based on each strategy group separately by using descriptive statistics: means and standard deviation.

- **Memory Strategies**

Before the chart presentation of items in memory strategies, we will first present the items with the cores of means and standards deviation in the following table. The items are represented in accordance with the order of the SILL.

Table 3.4. Means and Standards Deviation of the Items of Memory Strategies

Items	Mean	S-D	Level of strategy use	Rank in the Scope
<i>1. I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.</i>	3.35	1.022	Medium	1
<i>2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.</i>	3.04	1.238	Medium	4
<i>3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.</i>	2.57	1.365	Medium	7
<i>4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in</i>	3.14	1.309	Medium	3

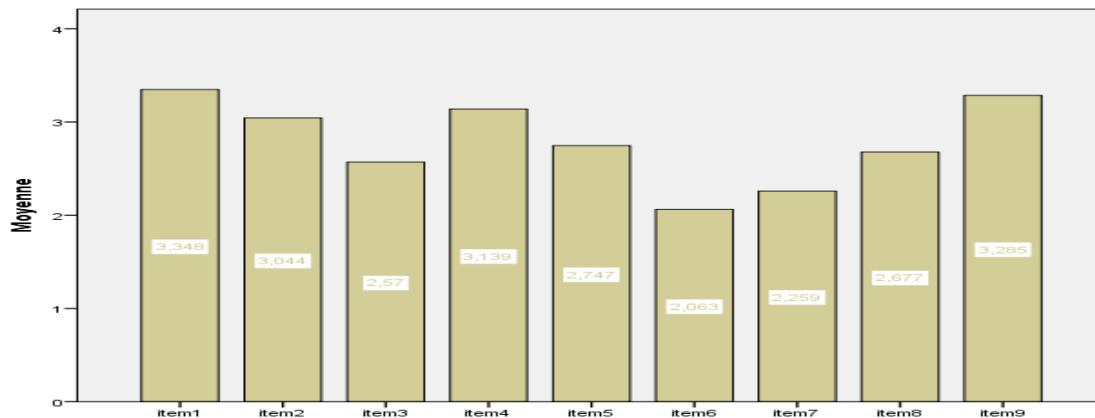
## CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

*which the word might be used.*

<i>5. I use rhymes to remember new English words.</i>	2.75	1.514	Medium	5
<i>6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.</i>	2.06	1.275	Low	9
<i>7. I physically act out new English words.</i>	2.26	1.195	Low	8
<i>8. I review English lessons often.</i>	2.68	1.066	Medium	6
<i>9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.</i>	3.28	1.272	Medium	2

After looking at the Table above, the difference in using individual language learning strategies is significant. It should be recalled that this strategy is the least used according to students interviewed in the survey. As we notice that items 1 and 9 registered the highest scores, respectively 3.35 and 3.28. Unlike the items 6 and 7 that have low scores.

Chart 3.3. The Average Extent of Using the Nine Items of Memory Strategies



As seen in the chart 3.3 , The first item: "*I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English*", has been identified as the most widely used strategy by students. Accordingly; the interviewed teacher 'A' stated that:

"I see more and more students who create bridges between what they are learning in class and their old vocabulary. This observation is more about grammar".

While, teacher 'B' told us that:

"very limited number of students who make the effort to connect the new concepts and rules learned with old knowledge, unfortunately many students are lazy."

The ninth item got the second best score: "*I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign*". In other words, students often use this technique to strengthen their memory. Teacher 'B' explained that:

"this strategy is used by students who have a Visual learning style".

The fourth item: "*I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used*" is ranked in third position. However, this item is very close to the ninth item, because it is based on the visual memory of the student. The teacher 'B' confirms the importance of visual memory in the learning of English.

The fourth most used strategy by students is the use of new English words in a sentence to remember them (item2). Teacher 'C ' says that: "It is noted that this strategy requires a lot of investment by the students, because it requires a lot of time to put new vocabulary in sentences".

Item 6 and 7 are the least used by students, among memory strategies. That is what student B. R. and student C. Z. confirmed in their statement:

"I have no idea about flash card", "I never use flash card because teachers never explain to us how to use it".

To conclude, although memory strategies can help students to learn English language, (to cope with difficulties caused mostly by a need to remember the vocabulary), the results in the chart above shows that the frequency of using these strategies is medium. However, it is the least used strategies by students. Hence, all the strategies are used with a medium level except Item 6 and Item 7 which have a low usage. The result is in accordance with Oxford’s (1990) notion who states that: "*even though memory strategies can be useful to enhance English learning, the students simply do not use memory strategies*" (p. 40).

▪ **Cognitive Strategies**

We have seen in the first chapter that cognitive strategies help students to develop: practicing language, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning and creating structure for input and output. Therefore, it is important to assess the way in which the students use these strategies. Before the chart presentation of cognitive strategies items, we will first present the items with the scores of means and standards deviation in the following table. The fourteen items that evaluate cognitive strategies are represented in accordance with the order of the SILL. When looking at the Table 3.5, the difference in using individual language learning strategies is significant.

Table 3.5. Means and Standards Deviation of the Items of Cognitive Strategies

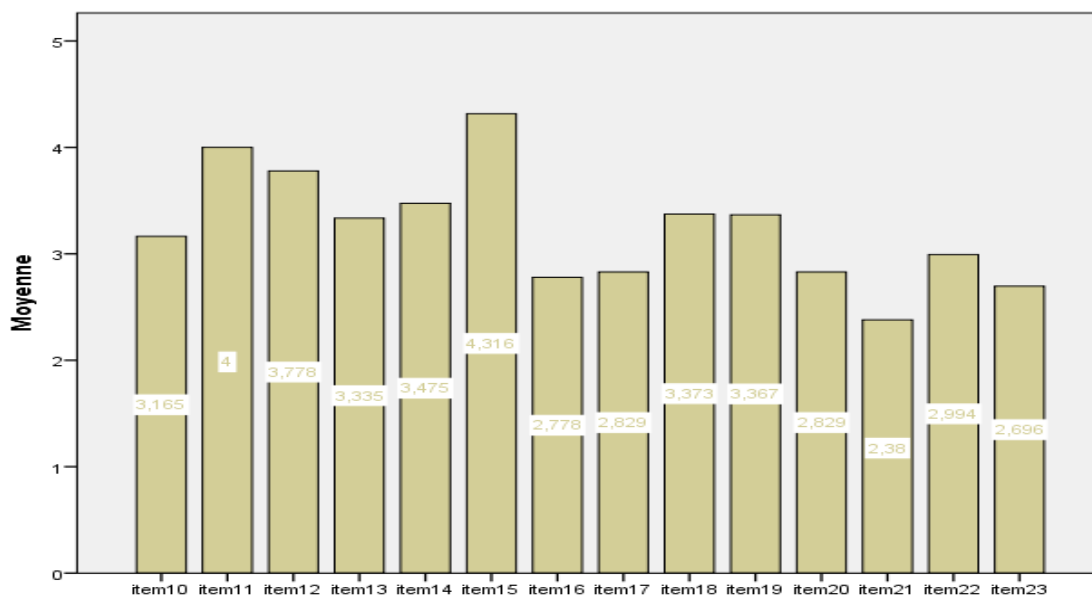
Items	Mean	S-D	Level of strategy use	Rank in the Scope
<i>10. I say or write new English words several times.</i>	3.16	1.271	Medium	7
<i>11. I try to talk like native English speakers.</i>	4.00	1.16	High	2
<i>12. I practice the sounds of English.</i>	3.78	1.013	High	3
<i>13. I use the English words I know in different ways.</i>	3.34	1.250	Medium	6
<i>14.. I start conversations in English.</i>	3.74	1.188	High	4
<i>15.. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English</i>	4.32	1.023	High	1

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<i>16.. I read for pleasure in English.</i>	2.78	1.255	Medium	10
<i>17. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.</i>	2.83	1.429	Medium	9
<i>18. I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.</i>	3.37	1.284	Medium	5
<i>19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.</i>	3.37	1.254	Medium	5
<i>20. I try to recognize and use patterns in English.</i>	2.83	1.190	Medium	9
<i>21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.</i>	2.38	1.121	Low	12
<i>22. I try not to translate word-for-word.</i>	2.99	1.323	Medium	8
<i>23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.</i>	2.70	1.310	Medium	11

From the first reading of the table above, we find that the items of this strategy have achieved good scores, even high scores. We recorded four items with a high usage, nine items with medium usage and only one item with low usage. Item 15 registered the highest score ( $M = 4.32$ ) and the item 21 obtained the lowest score ( $M = 2.38$ ). All the items of the cognitive strategies are presented in the following chart.

Chart 3.4. The Average Extent of Using the Fourteen Items of Cognitive Strategies



First, we begin the analysis by items that have achieved high scores. Item 15: "*I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English*" recorded the highest mean. This is consistent with the comments of the three interviewed teachers. These teachers emphasized the importance of watching TV channels that broadcast programs in English. Teacher 'B' revealed to us that:

"I Advice students to follow the TV channels in English, such as BBC".

The statement of student C. R. confirmed this observation:

"Since the beginning of the academic year I have not stopped watching TV channels in English, especially BBC, CNN and MBC 2".

In the same line of thoughts, the student B. H. told us that:

"English movies motivate me a lot, because it greatly improves my phonetics and enrich my vocabulary".

Item 11 "*I try to talk like native English speakers*" is connected to the previous analyzed one. Indeed, student B. H. made us the following statement:

"I do my best to talk like native English speakers, by imitating the movies actors".

We can realize that the investment of the students in watching English TV channels is related to the effort to speak like a native English language speakers.

▪ **Compensation Strategies**

As mentioned in the first chapter, compensation strategies are used by learners to defeat the difficulties caused by limitations in the field of knowledge by guessing intelligently in listening and reading, and overcoming the limitations in speaking and writing.

Table 3.6. Means and Standards Deviation of the Items of Compensation Strategies

Items	Mean	S-D	Level of strategy use	Rank in the Scope
24. <i>To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.</i>	3.58	1.011	High	2
25. <i>When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.</i>	3.29	1.361	Medium	4
26. <i>I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.</i>	3.42	1.142	High	3
27. <i>I read English without looking up every new word.</i>	2.61	1.225	Medium	6
28. <i>I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.</i>	3.15	1.146	Medium	5
29. <i>If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same</i>	4.00	.931	High	1

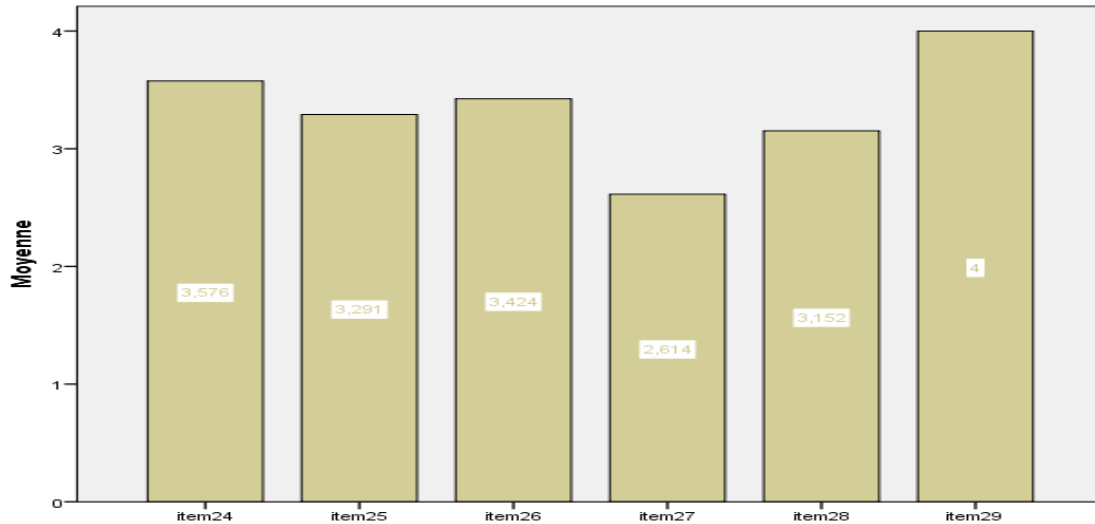
Compensation strategies form the last group of direct strategies. There are two types of compensation strategies: Guessing intelligently in listening and reading, and overcoming the limitations in speaking and writing.

According to the SILL they are assessed by six items, from 24 to 29. It is recalled that these strategies have obtained the third position in the general ranking of the SILL, after meta-cognitive strategies and social strategies (See table 3.2). As presented in the table 3.6, three items have achieved high scores and the other three have achieved average scores. Item 29 registered the highest score (M = 4.32) and the item



27 obtained the lowest score (M = 2.61). According to the same table, the differences in using individual language learning strategies are significant.

Chart 3.5. The Average Extent of Using the Six Items of Compensation Strategies



Guessing intelligently is the first type of compensation strategies; it is evaluated by the items 24, 27 and 28. In the Chart above we see that the item 24: *“To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses”*, recorded the highest score. To deal with vocabulary disabilities, students guess the meaning of the words they read or hear in the class. This strategy is commonly used and it is not reserved only to beginners, it is also used by advanced language learners. Teacher 'B' stated that:

“This strategy is very effective, but it requires a good level in French language, because there are a lot of bridges between the English and the French language, one thing that is not given to the 1st year EFL students”.

This statement is supported by the testimony of the teacher 'C':

"In my experience of teaching English for several years, I can confirm that those students who have a good level of French guess quickly and easily the vocabulary in English. These students improve rapidly the learning of English in comparison to others. The only problem they have is the difficulty of linking the ideas and sentences".

For the item 27: *“I read English without looking up every new word”*, we obtain a medium score (M=2.61). The fact that this item has obtained an average score, we can

say that 1st year EFL students give importance to new words when they read a text in English. Indeed, deficits in vocabulary motivate them to pay attention to new words. For them, each reading is an opportunity of enrichment of vocabulary.

The item 28 "*I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.*" obtain a medium score (M=3.15). Students do not have to guess what the others will say, because their focus is rather on what others are saying. Comprehension may be difficult to the point that it is not easy to guess what will be said.

However, the strategies used for overcoming limitations in speaking and writing are evaluated by items 25, 26 and 29. Item 25: "*When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.*" obtained a medium score (M=3.29). We noticed that this strategy is not much used by students, despite the fact that this strategy overcoming the limitations in speaking. Student K. D. told us that:

"I intend to use gestures to deal with my lack of vocabulary, but unfortunately I can't find the gestures which correspondents at best. For me the gestures are appropriate with common words such as: large, small, yesterday, tomorrow, all. But it is difficult to find the gesture for complicated words".

It is apparent from the chart 3.5 that the item 29: "*If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same*" registered the highest score in the scope (M=4.00). As such student D.C. said that:

"Our teacher of the oral module encourages us to use phrases instead of the words which we do not know. According to our teacher it is important to convey the idea in a way or another, but to do so he advised us to not feel embarrassed".

In general, the medium scores of using guessing strategies (24, 27, 28), which compensate for a limited language repertoire in listening or reading shows that the students can be perceived as quite positive. Although the resulting averages concerning the strategies used for overcoming limitations in speaking and writing (25,

26, 29) are so high comparing to the previous named ( $M=3.57$ ), a student's effort to overcome difficulties is present.

We found that strategy 29 was provided with highest score of usage until now assessed. When the teachers were asked to comment on student's usage of guessing strategies in general, they admitted that they are sure that their guesses are based on French language. That goes with the theory which States that guessing is based on either linguistic or non-linguistic clues. In other words, on previous knowledge of vocabulary, grammar or context.

### ▪ **Metacognitive Strategies**

Metacognitive strategies are considered to be the most important strategies for successful learning of English. This is what is confirmed by O'Malley et al. (1985): "students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction and ability to review their progress, accomplishments, and future learning directions" (cited in Blažková, 2011, p. 67).

Before the chart presentation of metacognitive strategies items, we will first present the items with the scores of means and standards deviation in the following table. The items are represented in accordance with the order of the SILL. When looking at the Table, the difference in using individual language learning strategies is significant. It should be recalled that this strategy is the first used according to students interviewed in the survey ( $M=3.72$ ), as usually used by students. This group of strategies contains nine items (item 30 to item 38).

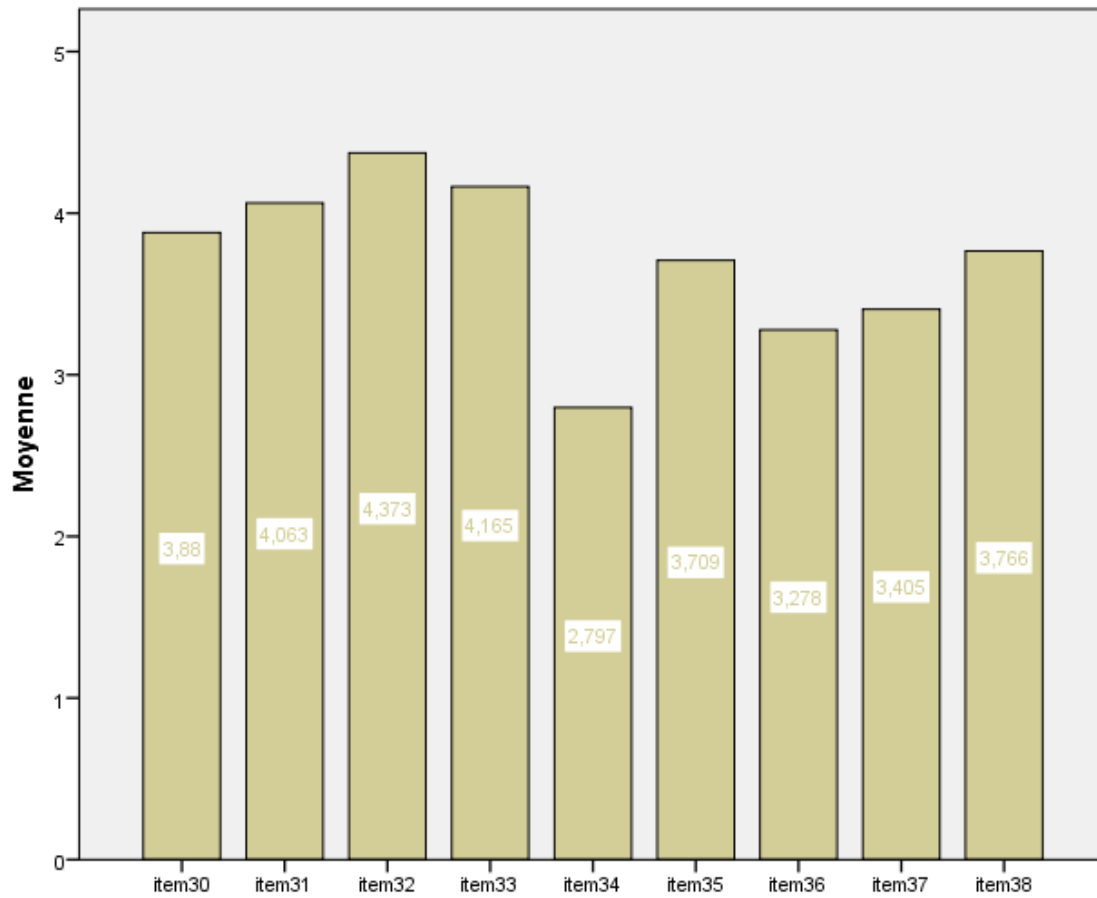
### CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 3.7. Means and Standards Deviation of the Items of Metacognitive Strategies

Items	Mean	S-D	Level of strategy use	Rank in the Scope
30. <i>I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.</i>	3.88	1.024	High	4
31. <i>I notice my English mistakes and I use that information to help me do better.</i>	4.06	.935	High	3
32. <i>I pay attention when someone is speaking English.</i>	4.37	.794	High	1
33. <i>I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.</i>	4.16	.970	High	2
34. <i>I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.</i>	2.80	1.261	Medium	9
35. <i>I look for people I can talk to in English.</i>	3.71	1.217	High	6
36. <i>I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.</i>	3.28	1.210	Medium	8
37. <i>I have clear goals for improving my English skills.</i>	3.41	1.146	High	7
38. <i>I think about my progress in learning English.</i>	3.77	1.113	High	5

From the first reading of the table above, we find that these strategies have achieved high scores. We recorded seven strategies with a high usage and only two with medium usage. Item 32 registered the highest score ( $M = 4.37$ ) and item 34 obtained the lowest score ( $M = 2.80$ ). All the items of the metacognitive strategies are presented in the following chart.

Chart 3.6. The Average Extent of Using the Nine Items of Metacognitive Strategies



With regard to item 30, "*I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English*", it is associated with a high level of strategy usage. We have seen that 82.9 % of students stated that they enjoy when they learn English. Pleasure of learning English reflects the great motivation of the students. Also, item 32: "*I pay attention when someone is speaking English*", shows clearly that students pay attention to specific aspect of the language. The student C. F. told us the following:

"I try to carefully follow the oral teacher Madam D.R, She speaks like a native speaker. The movements of her mouth as well as here gestures, motivates me to follow her speech."

This motivation in learning English is associated with a constant effort provided by students to plan and organize their learning. The analyses of items 34, 35 and 36 clearly demonstrates that students cannot succeed alone, without help and support of their teachers. This observation is raised by teacher B who confirmed that:

"I talk with my students about organizing and planning their time, setting goals, evaluating progress, seeking chances to practice the English language".

Items 36 and 37 results do not differ from the results obtained with other items. As it is represented in the chart 3.6, students give importance to setting goal in learning, as well as to the continuous evaluation of English learning progress.

We feel, after analyzing these items, that the high scores recorded by these strategies are partly due to the LMD reform. The LMD system is based on the autonomy that can develop the student in his learning process. So we can conclude that motivation, self monitoring and self evaluating are important for the students' success.

- **Affective Strategies**

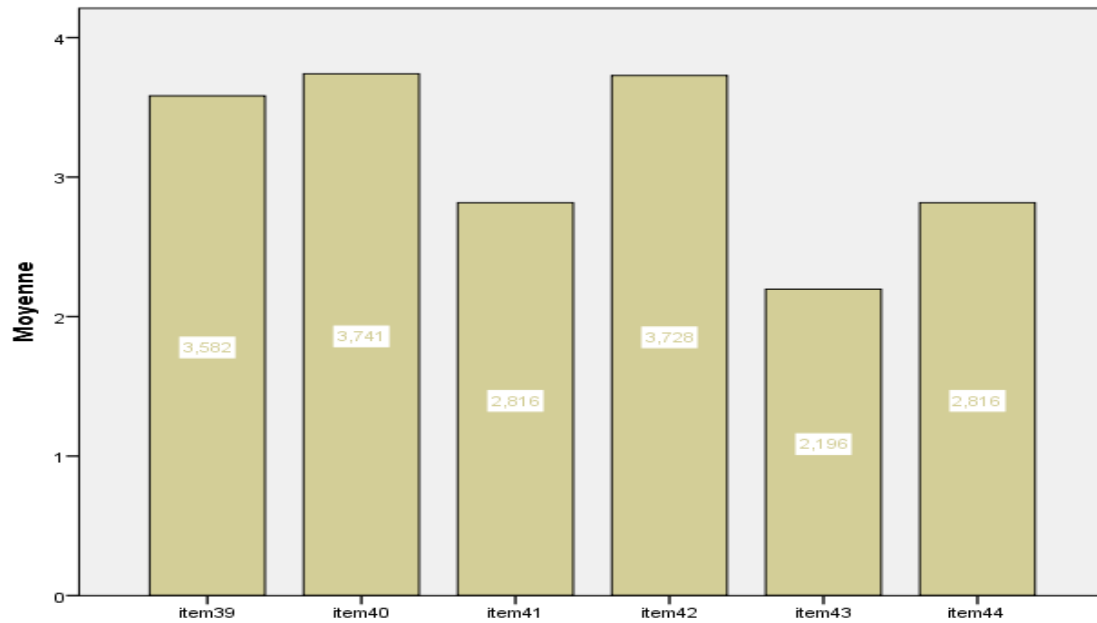
The affective aspect of the learner is one of the strongest stimulates the language learning success or failure. Indeed, as developed in chapter one, affective variables such as motivation, attitudes, and tolerance for ambiguity can significantly influence language learning. Affective strategies can make the process of learning easier and more effective. Indeed, the emotional aspects form the support of the English learning process. Negative prejudices against teachers, negative thinking and pessimism are dangerous factors that can completely stop the process of learning. It is affirmed by Oxford (1990) that few studies have examined the frequency of using of affective strategies, but those who have done so revealed that these strategies are woefully underused.

Table 3.8. Means and Standards Deviation of the Items of Affective Strategies

Items	Mean	S-D	Level of strategy use	Rank in the Scope
39. <i>I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.</i>	3,58	1,322	High	3
40. <i>I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.</i>	3,74	1,185	High	1
41. <i>I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.</i>	2,82	1,400	Medium	4
42. <i>I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.</i>	3,73	1,310	High	2
43. <i>I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.</i>	2,20	1,474	Low	5
44. <i>I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.</i>	2,82	1,422	Medium	4

Affective strategies is the second group of indirect strategies. According to the SILL they are assessed by six items, from 39 to 44. Item 39 concerns students lowering anxiety; the 40 and 41 items evaluate the use of strategies that dealt with encouraging oneself and items (42, 43, 44) take the students emotional temperature. It is recalled that these strategies have obtained the fourth position in the general ranking of the SILL, after meta-cognitive strategies, social strategies and compensation strategies (See table 3.2). As presented in the table 3.8, three strategies have achieved high scores, two are associated with a medium scores and one strategy has achieved low score. Item 40 registered the highest score ( $M = 3.74$ ) and item 43 obtained the lowest score ( $M = 2.20$ ). According to the same table, the differences in using individual language learning strategies are significant.

Chart 3.7. The Average Extent of Using the Six Items of Affective Strategies



Item 39: "*I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.*" obtained a high score ( $M=3.58$ ). Now, students feel the need to relax in order to overcome anxiety during the learning of English. Since learning is a very complex process that creates pressure and anxiety. This requires a strategy for adaptation on the part of students to deal with this emotional pressure. This was confirmed by student K.D. when he said the following:

"To overcome the anxiety in the class, I often think about my colleagues who have a less English level than me".

Another student B.R. made us the following statement:

"Anxiety in learning English, yes I feel it especially when I have to expressed in front of my colleagues in the classroom."

As stated previously, items 40 and 41 evaluated the degree of encouragement that student give for himself. We find that the item 40: "*I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake*" is associated with a high score ( $M=3.74$ ), which confirms the result of item 39. Indeed, the encouragement and motivation are two elements that 1st year EFL students use to overcome the fear of making mistakes in speaking English. On the other hand, the item 41: "*I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.*" is associated with an average score



(M=2.82), which proves that students have not developed tricks to motivate themselves. Teacher 'A' talked to us about this aspect during his interview. As such, he has advanced the following:

"I advice my students to find tips to get motivated, even if these tips appear simple such as saying: if I finish reading this book I will have the right to play soccer, or if I do my homework I have the right to follow the movie that I like."

The last three items of this group of strategies concern the assessment that the student can make of his level of motivation. Item 42: "*I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.*" got a high score (M = 3.73). Learning English is a source of stress, nervousness and anxiety for the 1st year EFL students to the point that they are able to feel and evaluate their tension and their nervousness. Administration and teachers are invited to develop methods to relax students and help them overcome this pressure. Extra-pedagogic activities such as exercising fun activities can serve students in this case.

Items 43 and 44 have achieved modest scores. In fact the item 43: "*I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.*" have the lowest score of this group of strategies (M = 2.20). It seems that students were not used to write their feelings in a language learning diary; this is a somehow strange tradition of our culture. In some countries like Western countries, children are encouraged to have their own diary from the early age, things that we do not find in Algeria.

Concerning item 44: "*I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.*" the score is higher comparing to item 43 (M = 2.84). This gives us an idea on oral preference compared to writing when it comes to assessing his motivation, because Algerian society has a speaking culture more than writing culture. We can hold two important findings from the analysis of items 42, 43 and 44. The first is that students are not highly motivated to express their motivation or to declare it to colleagues. The second is the preference of oral expression compared to the written expression. A number of researchers including ( O'Malley & Chamot, 1990 and

Cohen, 1996) have argued that learning strategies are culture specific (Cited in Hashemi & Hadavi, 2015).

▪ **Social Strategies**

Knowledge acquisition and language learning are also a social process. For this, interaction and cooperation between learners are essential for a good achievement. Indeed, English learning is not only the matter of the learner but also of his social environment, including his colleagues. For this reason researchers emphasize the importance of creating a social environment that is conducive to learn English. The social strategies help students to develop their ability in asking questions and in cooperating and empathizing with others.

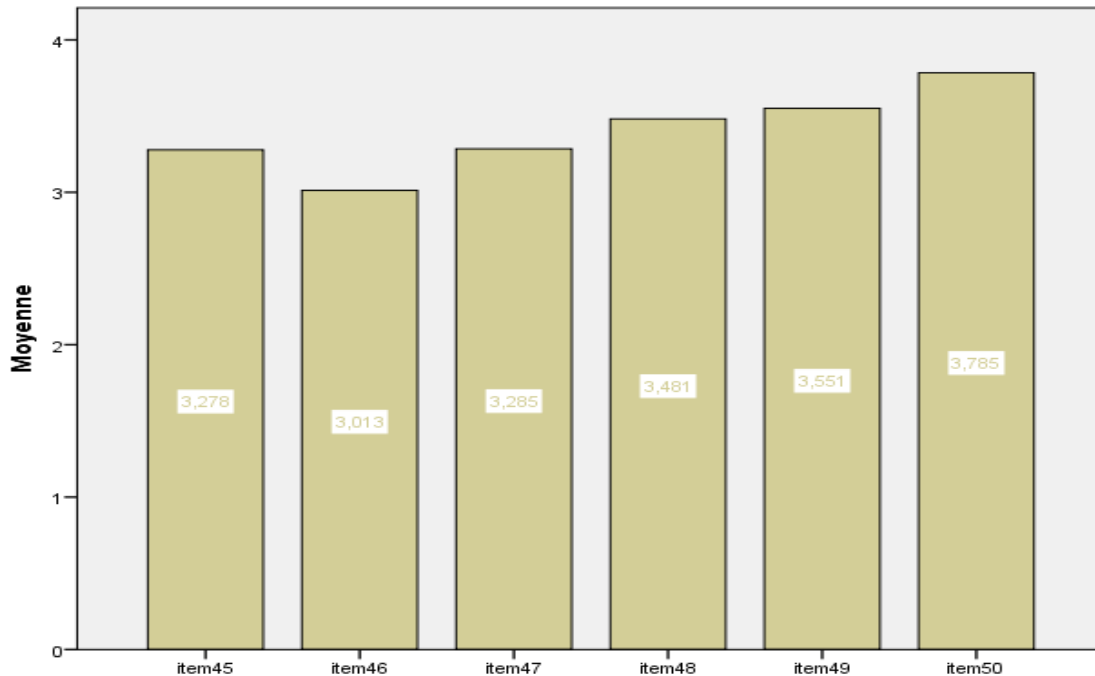
Table 3.9. Means and Standards Deviation of the Items of Social Strategies

Items	Mean	S-D	Level of strategy use	Rank in the Scope
45. <i>If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.</i>	3,28	1,335	Medium	4
46. <i>I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.</i>	3,01	1,378	Medium	5
47. <i>I practice English with other students.</i>	3,28	1,317	Medium	4
48. <i>I ask for help from English speakers.</i>	3,48	1,214	High	3
49. <i>I ask questions in English.</i>	3,55	1,239	High	2
50. <i>I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.</i>	3,78	1,259	High	1

According to the SILL; social strategies are assessed by six items (45 to 50). Items 45 and 46 are concerned with asking questions; items 47 and 48 evaluate the degree of cooperation with others; while items 49 and 50 assess the empathizing with others. It is recalled that these strategies have obtained the second position (M=3.40) in the general ranking of the SILL, after meta-cognitive strategies (See table 3.2). As presented in the table 3.9, three strategies have achieved high scores and three others are associated with medium scores. Item 50 registered the highest score (M = 3.78)

and the item 46 obtained the lowest score ( $M = 3.01$ ). According to the same table, the differences in using individual language learning strategies are significant.

Chart 3.8. The Average Extent of Using the Six Items of Social Strategies



The two items (45 and 46) assessed students' ability to ask questions when they do not understand what the others say or when they are afraid of making mistakes in the practice of English. These two items have achieved average scores. It seems that the students are reluctant to ask speakers to repeat if they do not understand. This is due, may be, to a lack of social interaction between who speaks and who hears. It is recalled that the student's self-confidence is important, as well as encouragement that the teacher is supposed to give for students. In this vein the student Q.C. confirmed that:

"Oral teacher often insists on the importance of asking questions and interrupting him if someone did not understand something."

The same student told us the following about the correction of the errors:

"I think I'm not supposed to ask my teacher to correct me when I'm talking, because it's part of his role as a teacher. When it comes to the colleagues in the class, I think it's difficult to ask someone who has same level as you to correct you! "

Unlike the ability to ask questions, the ability to cooperate and to empathize with others have achieved high scores. Indeed, students ask for help from English speakers as they make effort to ask questions in English. The item 50: "*I try to learn about the culture of English speakers*", earned the best score of the social strategies. This gives us a strong idea on the state of mind of students, seeking by all means to understand the English culture they consider this as an imperative acceleration of English learning.

Regarding the aspect of cooperation, teacher 'C' stated that:

"I have seen that students are generally organized in small groups of three to five people in order to cooperate all the year. They share digital documents, they are part of the same group of the social media, and even in the class they sit near to each other."

We have seen in the first chapter and in the above analysis that social strategies help learners to learn how to cooperate with others to become more effective learners. They also increase learners' language performance. Oxford (1990) states that when learners in a cooperative group are of different ability levels, they help each other more than learners whose ability levels are the same. The words of Oxford are consistent with the results obtained in the analysis of social strategies. Indeed, the results obtained by students during the academic year 2015/2016 shows clearly that they have different levels. This difference in levels, according to Oxford, is a source of social interaction.

### **3.4. Strategy Use and Students Gender**

The purpose of this section is to assess the effect of gender on reported strategy use. Gender has been shown to have some effect in the use of learning strategies. Some studies have reported a significant difference between how male and female students employ strategies (Marttinen 2008, and Seddigh & Shokrpour 2012, cited by Hashemi & Hadavi, 2015). For instance, El-Dib (2004) reported that in Kuwait, culture dictated the use of different strategies by male and female students.

In another study Hakan, Aydina & Bulenta, (2015) indicated differences according to gender in only compensation strategies in favor of male in Yildiz Technical

University, Istanbul, Turkey. Since there are two groups (Male and Female) and the use of Language learning strategies measured on an interval scale, a t-test is appropriate to test the null and alternate following hypotheses (Sekaran, 2003, p.316).

**H<sub>20</sub>: There are no differences in the perceived use of LLS between male and female of first-year EFL students at the University of Mescara.**

**H<sub>21</sub>: There are differences in the perceived use of LLS between male and female of first-year EFL students at the University of Mescara.**

The t-TEST is the most frequently used measure in second language research when comparing mean scores for two groups (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p. 205).

The analysis of independent samples of *t*-TEST will indicate if the perceived differences are significantly different for male than for female students of 1st year EFL at Mescara University at the significance level 0.05 as demonstrated in Table 3.10. If the results have a significance level less than 0.05, this means that the null hypothesis (H<sub>20</sub>) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>21</sub>) is accepted (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p.189).

Table 3.10. T-test Results of Language Learning Strategies with Respect to Gender

Strategies	Males (n=35)			Females (n=123)			Sig (2-tailed) confidence interval 95%
	M	S-D	Rank	M	S-D	Rank	
Memory strategies	2.74	.583	6	2.81	.629	6	.569
Cognitive strategies	3.02	.570	4	2.99	.661	5	.775
Compensation strategies	3.44	.672	3	3.31	.678	3	.320
Meta-cognitive strategies	3.59	.657	1	3.75	.705	1	.232
<b>Affective strategies</b>	2.85	.616	5	3.23	.753	4	<b>.011</b>
Social strategies	3.50	.790	2	3.37	.858	2	.419
Overall strategies	3.15	.648		3.25	.714		

Results related to the second research question (Is there a difference in students' language learning strategy use regarding gender?) reveal an overall medium range of strategy use (male:  $M = 3.15$  and female:  $M = 3.25$ ) as mentioned in the chart below. The differences between the mean scores of male and female students in regard to the overall strategy use were very small, we notice that female have used a little higher the overall strategy compared to male. Findings also indicate that both male and female students use meta-cognitive strategies (male: 3.59 and Female: 3.75) in the first position, social strategies (Male: 3.50 and Female: 3.37) in the second position and compensation strategies (Male: 3.44 and Female: 3.31) in the third position, while memory strategies were at the last position.

The only difference between male and female is in the ranking of the cognitive strategies and affective strategies. Indeed, cognitive strategies are classified in the fourth position for male and in the fifth position for female however affective strategies are classified in the fourth position for female and in the fifth position for male.

In the same table we found that there is no significant differences between male and female students in the use of the overall strategies except a significant difference in the usage of the affective strategies ( $Sig=0.011$ ) in favor of female. Also, there were no significant differences between male and female students in the use of the five others strategies from the six categories developed by Oxford. So, the hypothesis  $H2_1$  is partially accepted.

### **3.5. Strategy Use and Proficiency Level**

The purpose now is to assess the effect of LLSs use on the academic achievement because some studies have reported a significant differences between how students employ LLS and their academic achievement. Within the field of foreign and second language learning, authors (Cohen, 1990; Oxford, 1990) have identified numerous links between the use of language learning strategies and achievement in the target language.

In studies by Rubin et al (1975), successful language learners used different types of learning strategies, such as guessing from context. In other studies, successful learners used a wider range of strategies, employed them more effectively and understood the task better than did unsuccessful language learners. In an investigation by Nunan (1991), effective learners differed from ineffective learners in their greater ability to reflect on their own language learning processes (Green and Oxford, 1995, cited in Oxford, 1999).

Since there are more than two groups (three different achievement levels) and the usage of Language learning strategies measured on an interval scale, ANOVA is appropriate to test the null and alternate following hypotheses (Sekaran, 2003, p. 318).

**H<sub>3<sub>0</sub></sub>: there are no differences in the use of LLS at the three levels of academic achievement of first-year EFL students at Mascara University.**

**H<sub>3<sub>1</sub></sub>: there are differences in the use of LLS at the three levels of academic achievement of first-year EFL of Mascara University.**

A One-Way ANOVA (F-TEST) was used to investigate and compare the language learning strategies used by the first year EFL students with different levels of English achievement at the significance level 0.05. If the results have a significance level less than 0.05, this means that the null hypothesis (H<sub>3<sub>0</sub></sub>) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>3<sub>1</sub></sub>) is accepted (Brown and Rodgers, 2004, p. 189).

To examine the use of language learning strategies in each category of students with different levels of achievement, we have compared each category with the different levels. From the table below we note that students with a high level use strategies more than those with medium level and those with a medium level use strategies more than those with a low level. Consequently, this means that whenever the students use English language learning strategies frequently their level of achievement is higher. Comparing the use of each language learning strategy category, students with high and medium levels of achievement tended to use Meta-cognitive, Social and Compensation strategies more frequently than other strategies. Students with deferent levels of achievement use Meta-cognitive strategies the most and use Memory strategies the least.

Table 3.11. Presentation of LLS Use with respect to proficiency level

Proficiency level		Memory strategies	Cognitive strategies	Compensation strategies	Meta-cognitive strategies	Affective strategies	Social strategies
High	M	2.86	3.27	3.44	3.97	3.09	3.70
	S-D	.646	.497	.575	.702	.806	.736
Medium	M	2.78	2.92	3.33	3.66	3.13	3.37
	S-D	.605	.559	.723	.684	.782	.795
Low	M	2.65	2.69	3.31	3.43	3.18	2.68
	S-D	.628	.474	.632	.578	.768	.934
Total	M	2.79	2.99	3.36	3.72	3.12	3.39
	S-D	.618	.562	.675	.696	.783	.841

To examine the use of language learning strategies in each category of students with different levels of achievement, we had compared each category with the different levels. From the table below we note that students with a high level use strategies more than those with medium level and those with a medium level use strategies more than those with a low level. Consequently, this means that whenever the students use English language learning strategies frequently their level of achievement is higher. Comparing the use of each language learning strategy category, students with high and medium levels of achievement tended to use Meta-cognitive, Social and Compensation strategies more frequently than other strategies. Students with deferent levels of achievement use Meta-cognitive strategies the most and use Memory strategies the least.

Before presenting the results of the ANOVA analysis, we will present the matrix of Pearson correlation to find out the nature of the relationship that exists, on one hand between the six types of language learning strategies and in another hand between these strategies and the students' achievement. As seen in the Table 3.12, as a result of correlation analysis there have been found significant strong and positive correlations among the components of language learning strategies. For instance, it was found significant strong and positive correlations between Meta-cognitive strategy and Memory strategy ( $r=0.512$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); between Meta-cognitive and Cognitive ( $r=0.679$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); between Meta-cognitive and Affective ( $r=0.555$ ,  $p < 0.01$ );



between Meta-cognitive and Social ( $r=0.608$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and a good correlation between Meta-cognitive and Compensation ( $r=0.306$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). It can be said that all the components of language learning strategies are related to each other.

From the same Table we found a significant positive relationship between the students' academic achievement and three of language learning strategies, i.e., greater strategy use frequency  $\rightarrow$  greater achievement). More precisely, annual students grades were related at a moderate level with Affective strategies ( $r=0.065$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), Cognitive strategies ( $r=0.118$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Metacognitive strategies ( $r=0.208$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Table 3.12. Correlation Analysis Among the Components of Language Learning Strategies and Students' Achievement

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Memory strategy	Pearson Correlation	1						
2. Cognitive strategy	Pearson Correlation	.574**	1					
3. Compensation strategy	Pearson Correlation	.321**	.251**	1				
4. Metacognitive strategy	Pearson Correlation	.512**	.679**	.306**	1			
5. Affective strategy	Pearson Correlation	.503**	.533**	.314**	.551**	1		
6. Social strategy	Pearson Correlation	.402**	.480**	.222**	.608**	.404**	1	
7. Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.080	.188*	.034	.208**	.065*	.174	1

\*\* . Correlation significant at 0.01 Level (2 tailed).  
 \* . Correlation significant at 0.05 Level (2 tailed).

Results presented and discussed above encourage us to conduct the ANOVA analysis to see if the language learning strategies explains the First year EFL student's achievement. It is clear from the table below that student's achievement is explained by two categories of strategies, namely: Cognitive strategies ( $F=3.605$ ,  $p=0.029$ ) and Meta-cognitive strategies ( $F=4.167$ ,  $p=0.017$ ). What drives us to say that more students in 1st year EFL use the Meta-cognitive and Cognitive strategies more their achievement is high. We can conclude that the variation in the achievement level of the first year EFL students in Mascara University is explained by these two strategies, so these strategies predicted positively students' achievement.

## CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 3.13. One way ANOVA Students' Achievement by the Components of Language Learning Strategies

<b>ANOVA</b>						
		Sums of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Memory strategy	Between Groups	.435	2	.218	.562	.571
	Within Groups	60.012	155	.387		
	Total	60.447	157			
<b>Cognitive strategy</b>	Between Groups	2.193	2	1.096	3.605	<b>.029</b>
	Within Groups	47.132	155	.304		
	Total	49.324	157			
Compensation strategy	Between Groups	.444	2	.222	.489	.614
	Within Groups	70.403	155	.454		
	Total	70.847	157			
<b>Meta-cognitive strategy</b>	Between Groups	4.097	2	2.049	4.167	<b>.017</b>
	Within Groups	76.210	155	.492		
	Total	80.307	157			
Affective strategy	Between Groups	.410	2	.205	.326	.722
	Within Groups	97.277	155	.628		
	Total	97.687	157			
Social strategy	Between Groups	3.972	2	1.986	2.907	.058
	Within Groups	105.907	155	.683	.562	
	Total	109.880	157			

The results founded here are congruent with a number of the previous LLSs studies conducted in many countries, such as the U.S., Europe, and Asia (Anderson, 2005; Olah, 2006; Huang & Chen, 2009; Cited in Kumaraphan, 2015). More importantly, the findings are consistent with the findings of many studies in that students with high English proficiency level employed a greater diversity and more frequency of English learning strategies that did students with low English proficiency level (Kumaraphan, 2015; Hashemi & Hadavi, 2015).

### 3.6. Conclusion

The findings reported above show that the overall use of LLS by the students was found medium and that students gender have statistically a significant effect on frequency of overall strategy use. With regard to its effect on the use of each of the six categories of strategies, gender has a main effect on only one category (affective strategies) in favor of females.

The findings reported also that students with a high level use strategies more than those with medium level and those with a medium level use strategies more than those with a low level. Consequently, this means that whenever the students use English language learning strategies frequently their level of achievement is higher. The results of this research will help students to raise awareness in the use of LLSs. Thus, an important usage of LLSs will help students to improve their level. In the other hand, teachers should take into account students' differences in their teaching.

### 4.1. Introduction

Language learning strategies are used to complete listening, speaking, reading, and writing tasks. Learners will use their metacognitive, cognitive or social/affective strategies in various language learning tasks (Oxford, 1990). Furthermore, O'Malley & Chamot (1995) have stated that successful learners can solve language learning problems in an efficient way and they are favorable in choosing appropriate strategies, while less experienced ones may be less systematic at using strategies. However, all the learners need instructions to use strategies easily to promote their performance. Hence, to reach the effective use of learning strategies, Language Learning Strategy Instruction (LLSI) have to be implemented into regular language lessons (Kinoshita, 2003).

Therefore, this chapter provides an overview of language learning strategies instruction and discusses the definitions, importance, types of language learning strategies instructions, options for providing LLSI, models of LLSI, implementing LLSI into language classroom, past and recent research. By the end of this chapter, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and recommendation for further research are presented in turn.

### 4.2. Language Learning Strategies Instruction

Authors have used different terms for language learning strategies instruction, some of them (e.g., Oxford, 1990) use the term of 'strategy training', and others (e.g., Chamot 2004) prefer the term of 'strategy instruction' (kozmonova, 2008). Ellis uses the term "strategy training" and states that it "[...] *provides a way of helping learners to become autonomous*" (Ellis, 1997, cited in *ibid*, p. 45). Cohen (2002), in his turn, uses the term of "strategy training" and provides many approaches to strategy training, Strategies-based instruction (SBI) is one of his most as the most comprehensive way of implementing strategy training (kozmonova, 2008).

In the other hand, Chamot (2004) uses the term of 'strategy instruction', and she recommended for strategy instruction to be integrated into regular lessons.

Furthermore, she proposes many models for language learning strategy instruction and discusses their positives and negatives (ibid).

Accordingly, Logan & Moore (2003) suggest that LLSI can help learners to be more autonomous in their learning, and that LLSI should involve two valuable steps which are increasing learner awareness and supporting them with the skills they need. In the same line, Chamot (2005) agrees that LLSI are actions that simplify a learning task, and supports language learners with a vast list of strategies for the purpose of learning language more effectively (kozmonova, 2008).

### **4.3. Aims and Importance of LLSI**

During the process of strategy training language learners are taught series of helpful strategies (kozmonova, 2008). Research in this field demonstrates that learners who get strategy training are better learners than those who do not, and that some methods for such training are more helpful than others (Oxford, 1990).

Other research indicates that language learner can learn autonomously. In Lee (1995) study, the findings presented that students achieved better final exam grades than mid-term exam grades, and proved the precedent studies by O'Malley et al (1985). Lee results affirmed also that strategy training for second language learner is an effective way for assisting college students at the beginning level.

Grenfell & Harris (1999) propose that by analyzing the strategies used by learners during the second language learning process, we acquire understanding into the meta-cognitive, cognitive, social, and affective methods implicated in language learning. Therefore, less successful language learners can become better language learners if they are taught new strategies.

There have been many published researches regarding strategy training. Parrot introduces various features of a 'good' learner, among others: "*The 'good' learner is one who takes decisions with regard to strategies to apply in learning*" (Parrot, 1993, quoted in kozmonova, 2008, p. 46). Moon states that "*one of the ideas behind learning to learn is that pupils need awareness of how they carry out learning tasks (of the*

## CHAPTER FOUR: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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*strategies they use) in order to improve and develop more flexible ways of working”* (Moon, 2000, quoted in kozmonova, 2008, p. 46). All these confirm the fact that strategy training is important in language learning and thus it should be integrated in teaching process (kozmonova, 2008).

For Cohen (2000), implying language learning strategies instruction help students learn to promote, control and assess their performance in a second language, and become more conscious about their learning (cited in Cohen, 2003). He also declares that strategy training focuses on supporting learners with the means to do the following:

- Self-diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in language learning.
- Become aware of what helps them to learn the target language most efficiently.
- Develop a broad range of problem-solving skills.
- Experiment with familiar and unfamiliar learning strategies.
- Make decisions about how to approach a language task.
- Monitor and self-evaluate their performance.
- Transfer successful strategies to new learning contexts.

(adopted from Cohen, 2003, p. 1)

### **4.4. Types of Language Learning Strategies Instruction**

Language learning strategies instructions can be instructed in at least three various ways namely awareness training, one time strategy training and long term strategy training (Oxford, 1990).

### **4.4.1. Awareness Training**

Awareness training is also called as conscious raising or familiarization training. In this type of training, learners become conscious of the language learning strategies effectiveness. This type of training is amusing and inspiring, it also makes the learners develop their information of strategies (ibid).

### **4.4.2. One Time Strategy Training**

One time strategy training includes exercising some strategies with learning activities. This type of training provides the learners with information of the strategy, when we can use it, how to use it and how to assess the progress of the language strategy. This training is recommended for learners who need a specific strategy which can be instructed in one or a more sessions. Generally, this training type is not as beneficial as long-term training (ibid).

### **4.4.3. Long Term Strategy Training**

Long term strategy training includes exercising strategies with language activities. Second language learners recognize the importance of strategies, when and how to use it, how to control and assess their own progress. Long term training is more extended and covers a bigger number of strategies. This strategy training type is more sufficient than one time training (ibid).

## **4.5. Providing Language Learning Strategies Instruction**

Many models for foreign language strategy training have been developed and implemented in different educational settings. As described below, Cohen (2003) develops seven options for providing LLSI:

### **4.5.1. General Study Skills Courses:**

These courses are designed for students with academic difficulties but can also be for successful students. General academic skills can be transmitted to the process of learning a foreign language, such as using flash cards and overcoming anxiety. These

courses focus on how learning a foreign language may be different from learning other academic subjects. Foreign language students can be motivated in order to develop learning strategies (Cohen, 2003).

### **4.5.2. Awareness Training (Lectures and Discussion):**

Also known as consciousness-raising, it consists of separated lectures and discussions and is always isolated from regular classroom instruction. This model gives students a general introduction to learning strategy. Oxford (1990) describes awareness training as courses in which learners become conscious with the language learning strategies (Cohen, 2003).

### **4.5.3. Strategy Workshops:**

Short workshops are another model to develop learner consciousness of strategies through awareness-raising and strategy-assessment activities. They can help to develop specific language skills. These workshops can be integrated as non-credit courses or as part of academic skills course. They often present lectures and discussions about the strategy use effectiveness (Cohen, 2003).

### **4.5.4. Peer Tutoring:**

In the 1970s, "Tandem" or peer tutoring programs began in Europe and are used in many universities in the United States. Holec (1988) describes this program as a system that pairs students of different language backgrounds into teaching sessions. Requirements of the teaching sessions are that students have to meet regularly, practice each language separately, and spend the same amounts of time with each language. Students are encouraged to organize study groups. Those who have completed the language course may also be invited to these meetings. In this way, less proficient students can benefit from more proficient students (Cohen, 2003).



### **4.5.5. Strategies in Language Textbooks:**

Language Learning Strategies have been adopted by many foreign language textbooks into their curricula. However, students may not be conscious that they are using strategies at all, unless the strategies are presented by the classroom teacher. Some language textbooks propose strategy activities and explicit explanations of the benefits of the strategies they present. The advantage of using this type of textbooks is that students do not need extracurricular training; the textbooks develop strategy use both in tasks and skills (Cohen, 2003).

### **4.5.6. Videotaped Mini-Courses:**

Aiming at increasing students' awareness of learning strategies, Rubin (1996) created an interactive videodisc program and an instructional guide, to make students know how to transfer strategies to new tasks and to help them be responsible of their own learning of the language. The instructional program consists of 20 foreign languages and provides students with the opportunity to select the language, topic, and difficulty level, all that using authentic language situations. Materials are designed to face students to different strategies for use in different contexts (Cohen, 2003).

### **4.5.7. Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI):**

SBI is a learner-centered approach to teaching that include both implicit and explicit integration of strategies into the course. Students experience the advantages of integrating the strategies to the learning. In addition, students have many chances to share their own strategies with other students and to develop their strategy use in the typical language tasks. Teachers can individualize strategy training and reinforce strategies while presenting the regular course content (Cohen, 2003).

According to Cohen, in a typical SBI classroom teachers do the following:

- Describe, model, and give examples of potentially useful strategies.
- Elicit additional examples from students, based on students' own learning experiences.

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- Lead small-group and whole-class discussions about strategies.
- Encourage students to experiment with a broad range of strategies.
- Integrate strategies into everyday class materials, explicitly and implicitly embedding them into the language tasks to provide strategy practice.

(Adopted from Cohen, 2003, p.2).

Teachers may implement SBI by designing course materials, then decide which strategies to integrate and where; beginning with a list of strategies they want to concentrate on and establish activities around them; or establishing strategies directly into the lessons (ibid).

The approaches presented before give options for establishing strategy training with learners. Based on the needs and the time available to an institution, the next step is to plan the instruction students will receive.

### **4.6. Language Learning Strategies Instruction Models**

O'Malley et al. (1994) declares that if learning strategies are favorably taught to less proficient learners, it could increase the improvement of second language skills; and that second language instructors could show a valuable character by teaching students how to employ learning strategies to various language tasks, thus, researchers have investigated and proved different models for strategy training (Liu, 2010). Even though no practical proof has been supported to discover a best way for administering strategy training, at least three teaching plans have been recognized. Each plan has been outlined to increase student knowledge of the reason of strategy use, supply students with favorable circumstances to use the strategies in new learning contexts (ibid).

### 4.6.1. O'Malley and Chamot's Model

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is designed to improve the academic language skills of less proficient English language learners in upper elementary and secondary schools. The CALLA is established on a theoretical model on which it proposes that language is a mixed cognitive skill. It needs expanded exercising in order to perform at an autonomous way (ibid).

Strategy training is integrated into the CALLA lesson plan, along with language advancement tasks, in addition, new learning strategies are instructed and trained. CALLA lessons have three main goals, namely, content objectives, language objectives, and learning strategy objectives; they involve both the teacher and the learner (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, cited in Liu, 2010). Each CALLA lesson is divided into six steps namely:

- (1) Preparation: The teacher describes students' learning strategies for usual activities, such as remembering their knowledge, previewing the key vocabulary and ideas to be presented to the lesson;
- (2) Presentation: The teacher forms, names, describes new strategy; asks students if and how they have used it, such as discriminating concentration, self-controlling, interpretation, illustration, and note-taking strategies;
- (3) Practice: The students experience new strategy; the teacher inspire autonomous strategy use and establish an oral or written record or categorize ideas;
- (4) Evaluation: The students assess their own strategy use right after exercise, deciding the influence of their own learning by giving a sum up or a self-talk, either collectively or individually;
- (5) Expansion activities: The students transmit the strategies to new activities, incorporate strategies into groups, expand collection of favorable strategies and combine them into their actual education foundation.
- (6) Assessment: The teacher evaluates the students' use of strategies and effect on efficiency.

(Adopted from Liu, 2010, p. 103)

In this model teachers and learners often have the choice of visiting again the instructional stages as wanted for language learners of various levels, which has been treated as a pilot for integrating a whole-language method to instruction, and it has been used in the EFL classroom program (Chamot, 2005).

### 4.6.2. Oxford's Model

Oxford's strategy training model targeted the learning strategies' teaching, it is beneficial for long term strategy training. Oxford's Model (1990) consists of eight steps, they are stated step by step in the following procedure:

- Learners are asked to immerse into an authentic language task without instructional cues;
- Suggest and demonstrate other helpful strategies, mentioning the need for greater self-direction and expected benefits, and making sure that the students are aware of the rationale for strategy use;
- Allow learners plenty of time to practice the new strategies with language tasks and show how the strategies can be transferred to other tasks;
- Provide practice using the techniques with new tasks and allow learners to make choices about the strategies they will use to complete the language learning tasks;
- Help students understand how to evaluate the success of their strategy use and to gauge their progress as more responsible and self-directed learners.

(adopted from Liu, 2010, pp. 102-103)

This model is adaptable and each phase can be readjusted for the needs in various orders. However, the disadvantage of this model is that it is difficult to be adopted into a usual classroom program (Liu, 2010). Oxford (1990) proposes in her model an effective method for the presentation of strategies that express explicit strategy awareness, analysis of the advantages of strategy use, self-assessment of language performance (ibid).

### 4.6.3. Cohen's Model

Cohen's (1998) Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI) Model is an approach that focus on learners in the first place, it contains both explicit and implicit involvement of strategies into the sessions. In a SSBI Model, the teachers do the following roles:

- Teacher as diagnostician: The teacher assists the students identify current strategies
- Teacher as language learner: The teacher exchanges his own learning experiences and thinking processes.
- Teacher as learner trainer: The teacher shows the students how to use learning strategies.
- Teacher as coordinator: The teacher controls students' study plans and facilitates difficulties
- Teacher as coach: The teacher gives guidance on students' progress.

(adapted from Cohen, 1998, cited in Liu, 2010, p. 103).

Cohen's model explains the work of a teacher in a daily EFL classroom. It present more adaptability for instructors to incorporate the language strategies training explicitly and implicitly into daily classroom sessions. Many strategies training studies on cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies training embrace this model (Liu, 2010).

### 4.6.4. Grenfell and Harris's Model

Grenfell and Harris (1999) established a model of language learning strategies instruction as follows:

- Awareness raising: The students complete a task, and then identify the strategies they used.
- Modeling: The teacher models, discusses the value of new strategy, makes checklist of strategies for later use.
- General practice: The students practice new strategies with different tasks.

- Action planning: The students set goals and choose strategies to attain those goals.
- Focused practice: The students carry out action plan using selected strategies; the teacher fades prompts so that students use strategies automatically.
- Evaluation: The teacher and students evaluate success of action plan; set new goals; cycle begins again.

(Adopted from Grenfell and Harris, 1999, cited in Liu, 2010, pp. 103-104).

All the models mentioned previously have a common typical value of learning strategies. The strategies became internalized and then used to solve new tasks, while exercising and assessing,

### 4.7. Implementing LLSI into Language Classroom

Cohen and many authors agreed that strategy training should be integrated into the language lessons. For instance, Oxford (1994) gives some steps for implementing strategy training, e.g., *“training should, if possible, be integrated into regular L2 activities over a long period of time rather than taught as a separate, short intervention”* (Kozmonova, 2008, p.48). Chamot (2004) also supports implementing strategy training into language lessons: *“[...] teachers should certainly opt for explicit instruction and should probably integrate the instruction into their regular course work, rather than providing a separate learning strategies course”* (ibid). Additionally, Chamot highlights on the importance of strategy training for all students with different proficiency levels: *“Learning strategy instruction should not be postponed until intermediate or advanced level courses because beginners also need strategies that can make their learning more successful and increase their motivation for further study”* (ibid). According to Clouston (1997), there are three steps for implementing LLSI in the classroom:

### **Step 1: Study Your Teaching Context**

After the observation of students' behavior in class, teachers will know what LLS they are using. Talking to students or interviewing them can also provide a lot of information about students, their goals, motivations, and the LLS they use. Teachers should study their teaching methods and their classroom style. To do so they should look at their lesson plans and identify if they have integrated various ways in which students can learn the language.

### **Step 2: Focus on LLS in Your Teaching**

Teachers should take into account their learners needs and the type of materials they use while selecting the LLS in teaching. They should also encourage their students to use their LLS in the class activities and supply them with favorable circumstances to use their LLS.

### **Step 3: Reflect and Encourage Learner Reflection**

In the third basic level of implementing LLSI into Language Classroom, teachers has to reflect on their own experiences in language learning and on the effectiveness of LLS within the lesson. It is important in this step to encourage learner reflection.

(Clouston, 1997, cited in kozmonova, 2008).

It is recommended to well prepare for strategy training and then integrate it into language lessons so that learners can use LLS on different tasks. In the end teachers are recommended to evaluate the strategy training program effectiveness.

### **4.8. Research on Learning Strategies Instructions**

Language learning strategy instruction researches has been focusing on verifying its effectiveness. Researchers have developed a way to improve language performance by encouraging language learners to use specific learning strategies (Kinoshita, 2003).

In Weinstein (1978) study, students in the ninth grade were trained to use different strategies and establish them to reading comprehension and memory tasks. The results were positive and they revealed that students trained on using strategies performed significantly better than the students who were not trained (ibid).

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Wenden (1987) describes that giving students a list of self-evaluation strategies showed a good use of this strategy. This investigation and others prove for us that language learning strategies can be taught and training learners to use specific learning strategies can affect positively on the performance in the language learning process (ibid).

Strategy instruction research has investigated the instructional phases used by language teachers to involve strategy instruction into foreign language lessons. Chamot et al. (1988) research has focused on discovering how strategy instruction can be integrated into Spanish and Russian foreign language class activities by three regular classroom teachers. The results revealed that even if each teacher had his own way of integrating learning strategy instruction, all of them used direct instruction (presenting the purpose and value of strategies for students) and then continue with a structured phase of introducing, practicing, reinforcing and evaluating strategy use after each language activity (ibid).

Robbins (1996) renders a description of the phases used to integrate strategy instruction at two universities in Kyoto, Japan. Students were trained to use these instructions to plan, lead, use and check strategies while they are in a language learning tasks. The success of these phases depends on the lesson are modeling, explanation, encouragement, and increasing the use of strategies. In fact, research by Robbins (1996) provides insights into instructional sequences and teaching approaches (ibid).

### **4.9. Pedagogical Implications for Research and Instruction**

According to her LLS research findings, Oxford dedicated a set of suggestions for exploration and instruction:

- Language researchers must form a concept of language learning strategies in a way that involves the social and affective sides of learning.



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- Through strategy assessment, teachers can help their students identify the ability of using language learning strategies for creating faster, easier and more efficient learning.
- On the base of the strategy assessment' information, teachers can incorporate strategy instruction into daily classroom program in a relaxing, but specific way (e.g., Oxford 1990; O'Malley & Chamot 1990). Teachers must also regard dissimilarities in gender, and other factors that affect learning strategy use.
- Teachers need to be skillful in their selection of strategies to use in training.
- Using various evaluation modes with the same group of students during the strategy assessments could be cross-related. This would be partly responsible for the validity of different assessment techniques.
- Studies need to be reflected so the more rational information becomes ready for use within and across populations.

(Adapted from Oxford, 1996)

Accordingly, Dickinson (1992) developed an "IDEAL" process for learners to choose and control their use of learning strategies (Identify, Define, Explore, Act, Look), which is reflected in Williams & Burden's (1997) principle questions for learners

- What do I want to accomplish? (Identify)
- Do I know specifically what I am doing? (Define)
- Why am I doing it? (Explore)
- How will it be valuable to me? (Explore)
- Which strategies shall I use to reach my aim best? (Act).
- How do I tell when I have succeeded? (Look).

(Adopted from Williams & Burden, 1997)

The research results compiled earlier in response to the research questions (see chapter three) illustrate that there is a relationship between students' gender, academic achievement level, and students' use of language learning strategies. Following are

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some instructions which try to advance the learners use of LLSs and (as a result) the academic achievement.

1) Although students may be dissimilar in their knowledge of strategies, understanding about assignments for successful strategy use should be submitted to direct them to become more determined learners of the target language. For that reason, teachers may present the learning strategies and explain how to take suitable strategies to fit students' needs in various learning tasks. Additionally, many applications would help students well know the different learning strategies, then they grown-up using those numerous strategies spontaneously. This implication would be connected to the idea of autonomous learning concentrating on personal needs and goals.

2) Teachers and students should raise their knowledge of these different strategies through suitable training for both groups. Better student awareness about strategies can guide them to be certain, self-reliant, and successful language learners (Abu-Radwan, 2011). Successful language learners have the capacity to connect specific categories of language learning strategies in practical manner according to their own learning needs.

3) Teachers can take direct actions in language classrooms in terms of combining explicit and implicit strategy instructions into the daily lessons (Cohen, 2003).

4) Explicit training in strategy use is fundamental, because it permits students with different competence levels to exercise a long list of these strategies.

5) The findings revealed that high proficient students recorded more strategy use than low-proficient students. This signify that learners at different levels have different needs. The teacher have to be explicit in promoting knowledge for low-proficiency learners, this will be useful to enhance understanding of the what and how of successful language learning.

6) Researchers have supported that strategy training should be combined into language curriculum (e.g., Khalil, 2005; Abu-Radwan, 2011). Therefore, teachers should include different tasks and activities that target strategies which are basic for success in learning a second language. The fact that students with various proficiency levels

make use of different learning strategies should lead the improvement of instructional materials (Chamot & O'Malley, 1995).

7) Materials such as textbooks should be evaluated by the teachers in order to see whether they already include language learning strategies or language learning strategy training.

### **4.9.1. Limitations of the Study**

It is hoped that the current study has presented valuable information to the study of assessing LLS use by the 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL students at Mascara University. As with any other study there are some limitations, but none of them is a risk to the validity of the research. Though, these limitations may give suggestions for future researchers on how the use of LLSs might be further investigated. The limitations of this study were as follows:

- 1) Since the questionnaire was the main instrument in this study, its data is based on self-report, so it is possible in the questionnaire that the students overestimated or underestimated how frequently they use certain strategies.
- 2) The participants in this study were limited to the 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL students at the department of English language at the University of Mascara. This excludes graduate and post graduate English language students in different years and at different departments .
- 3) The study aims at assessing the use of LLSs by 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL students; and the relationship between the students' language learning strategies, gender and academic achievement. This is not to refuse the fact that factors other than gender may also influence the use of LLSs. However, the present study is not concerned of all the possible factors.

### 4.9.2. Suggestions for Further Research

- 1) The literature review presented in this study revealed that, in the area of Arab EFL in general and Algerian EFL in particular, LLSs have not been investigated enough. Therefore, further researchers are highly recommended to conduct experimental, and cross-sectional studies on Arab EFL learners in general and Algerian EFL students in particular. These types of studies can provide a better understanding of Arab and Algerian EFL learners' LLS use.
- 2) Other studies should investigate the LLS use of EFL learners at different ages and different educational levels, i.e. middle school, secondary school.
- 3) More research on the factors that affect strategy choice would be valuable. Learning style is a crucial factor, along with age, nationality, beliefs, and previous educational and cultural experiences.
- 4) Future researchers may use multiple-method approaches such as observation, think-aloud, and diaries.
- 5) Investigating the effect of training on LLS use, including the success of use, is a vital issue to take into consideration in further research.

### 4.10. Conclusion

At the end of this chapter it is necessary that learning strategies research continues, for a better understanding of the learning and teaching process. Language learning strategy instruction can take part in the improvement of learner autonomy and increase teacher competence, still, research in particular language learning framework is essential to understand it and to improve second language acquisition.

Learning strategies are instruments that learners use to raise their language learning. They are one of the flexible element that make distinction between successful and less successful language learners. The researches of learning strategies can be done in different ways according to the researcher approach. This studies attempt to determine and examine how language is learned. The findings aid to inform language

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teachers how to prepare less proficient learners to become more proficient in language learning. As a consequence of that, there have been different language learning strategies instruction plans, i.e. awareness training, and strategies-based instruction.

All kinds of strategies training include the improvement of the learners' LLSs. The instructions for realizing strategy training programs present a collection of alternatives in order to make the training fit all the students. The crucial concerns in planning a strategy training program are the students' needs, the accessible resources (e.g., time, money, materials), and the usefulness of administering this type of instruction. Yet, it is so substantial (When integrating LLSI in a second language curriculum) to pick out an instructional model that presents the strategies to the students and increases recognition of their learning alternatives; teaches them to recognize, apply, assess, and transmit strategies to new learning status; and encourages learner autonomy.

### GENERAL CONCLUSION

Many studies have proved that foreign language achievement is related to language learning strategies (e.g. Intaraprasert, 2000; Oxford, 1989). Hence, to promote the learners' efficient language learning, language learning strategies is an essential point to pay attention to. One way to help students improve learning outcomes is to identify the language learning strategy they use. Added to that, there is sufficient evidence that language learning strategy use benefit many students not only high achieving students, but also underachieving ones (Chamot, 1996; Cohen, 1998). This benefit could empower students to be more successful in their language learning.

This dissertation was a descriptive study based on a survey research. It is divided into four parts. The first chapter provides the base for the research as it tries to cover the field of language learning strategy. The second chapter tries to provide a description and analysis of the teaching/learning situation in Algeria in order to shed light on the students' educational background. The research design and data collection procedures are presented along with the research questions, the research instruments and the profile of the subjects in question.

As for the third chapter, the relevant data obtained were presented in order to answer three research questions: the first question "What are the language learning strategies used by the first year EFL students at the University of Mascara as reported in the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)?", the second question "Are there differences in the students' language learning strategy use regarding gender?", and the third question "Are there differences in the students' language learning strategy use regarding their academic achievement?". Consequently, The findings revealed that the overall use of LLS by the students is medium ( $M=3.23$ ). The average of six groups' strategy use ranged from 3.72 to 2.79. As for strategy categories, meta-cognitive strategies was the most frequently used strategy ( $M=3.72$ ) and memory

strategy was the least frequently used ( $M=2.79$ ). The interviews analyze support these findings.

Furthermore, there are statistically no significant differences between male and female students in the use of the overall strategies and in the use of the six categories of strategies except in the use of the affective strategies which has a significant difference in favor of female ( $Sig=0.011$ ). From the analysis of the correlation between the academic achievement results and the students' learning strategy use, it was shown that there are statistically a significant and positive relationship between the students' academic achievement and three of language learning strategies (Affective strategies ( $r=0.065$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), Cognitive strategies ( $r=0.118$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Meta-cognitive strategies ( $r=0.208$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Moreover the student's achievement is explained by two categories of strategies, namely: Cognitive strategies ( $F=3.605$ ,  $p=0.029$ ) and Meta-cognitive strategies ( $F=4.167$ ,  $p=0.017$ ). So these strategies effect positively students' achievement. The findings reported above confirm totally the first hypotheses and it support partially the second and the third hypotheses.

Since language learners use language learning strategies to complete a language learning task or to solve a problem, Thus, for guiding learners towards the effective use of learning strategies, many researchers suggests to integrate Language Learning Strategy Instruction (LLSI) into daily language lessons. Therefore, this chapter provides an overview of language learning strategies instruction and discusses the definitions, importance, types of language learning strategies instructions, options for providing LLSI, and models of LLSI, implementing LLSI into language classroom. By the end of this chapter, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and recommendation for further research are presented in turn.

Finally, we may conclude that the attention is no more paid to “what to learn”, but points out the significance of “how to learn”. With respect to this, a role of teachers and learners has changed as well. Teachers no more provide learners only with knowledge but with the methods, ways and strategies that enable the pupils to become more effective on their pathways to success. In other words, they help learners to reach the competence to learn.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A : Letter Seeking Permission to Carry Out Research

Appendix B : Letter of Approval to Conduct Research in the Department of English Language.

Appendix C : A Sample of the SILL Questionnaire

Appendix D : A Sample of the Arabic version of the SILL Questionnaire

Appendix E : A Sample of the Response Sheet for the SILL Questionnaire

Appendix F : Students' Interview

Appendix G : Teachers' Interview

Appendix H : Selected Extracts of Students' Responses Through Interview

Appendix I : Selected Extracts of Teachers' Responses Through Interview

Appendix J : The Final Academic Results of the First Year EFL Students

## **Appendix A: Letter Seeking Permission to Carry Out Research**

**In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful**

Dear sir: Head of English Language Department

Peace be upon you,

**Subject: Request for conducting the research tools at the English language department.**

First of all, I highly appreciate being a post-graduate student who used to be your student at the graduate level. Referring to the above subject, I am doing an investigation through a magister degree thesis entitled:

**Assessing Language Learning Strategy Use:  
The Case of 1<sup>st</sup> Year EFL Students at the University of Mascara.**

For conducting my research, I adopted the oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) questionnaire and the oxford placement test as well as a students' interview.

I would be very grateful if you would referee my research tools to be conducted at the department of foreign languages section of English with the 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL students.

Kind regards.

**Researcher: Tabeti Soumia**

**Appendix B: Letter of Approval to Conduct Research in the  
Department of English Language.**

## Appendix C: A Sample of the SILL Questionnaire

### Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

Source: Oxford (1990)

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#### Directions

This form of the *Strategy Inventory for Language Learning* (SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language.

You will find statements about learning English. Please read each statement. On the separate worksheet, write the response (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) that tells *how true of you the statement is*.

1. Never or almost never true of me
  2. Usually not true of me
  3. Somewhat true of me
  4. Usually true of me
  5. Always or almost always true of me
- 

#### Part A

1. I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.
2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.
4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.
5. I use rhymes to remember new English words.
6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.
7. I physically act out new English words.
8. I review English lessons often.
9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.

#### Part B

10. I say or write new English words several times.
11. I try to talk like native English speakers.
12. I practice the sounds of English.
13. I use the English words I know in different ways.
14. I start conversations in English.
15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.
16. I read for pleasure in English.
17. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.
18. I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.
19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.



20. I try to find patterns in English.
21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.
22. I try not to translate word-for-word.
23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.

*Part C*

24. To understand unfamiliar words, I make guesses.
25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.
26. I make up new words if I don't know the right ones in English.
27. I read English without looking up every new word.
28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.
29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.

*Part D*

30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.
31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.
32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English.
33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.
34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.
35. I look for people I can talk to in English.
36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.
37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills.
38. I think about my progress in learning English.

*Part E*

39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.
40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making mistakes.
41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.
42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.
43. I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.
44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.

*Part F*

45. If I don't understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.
46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.
47. I practice English with other students.
48. I ask for help from English speakers.
49. I ask questions in English.
50. I try to learn about the culture of English speakers

## Appendix D: A Sample of the Arabic version of the SILL Questionnaire

### استبيان حول استراتيجيات تعلم اللغة

Arabic Version of Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

© R. Oxford, 1989

نموذج خاص لدارسي اللغة الإنجليزية من الناطقين باللغات الأخرى

#### التعليمات

هذا النموذج مُخصص لدارسي اللغة الإنجليزية كُلمة ثانية أو أجنبية. ستُعرضُ عليك عبارات تتعلق بتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية يتعينُ عليك قراءتها. ضع علامة X في الخانة التي تعبر عن مدى تطابق هذه العبارة على حالتك.

1. لا تنطبق، أو نادر جداً ما تنطبق على حالتي.

2. أحياناً، تنطبق على حالتي (أقل من نصف الأوقات).

3. إلى حد ما، تنطبق على حالتي (تقريباً نصف الأوقات).

4. غالباً، تنطبق على حالتي (أكثر من نصف الأوقات).

5. دائماً ما تنطبق على حالتي.

أجب إلى أي مدى تنطبق هذه العبارات على حالتك. تذكر أنه لا توجد هناك إجابة صحيحة أو خاطئة بين هذه العبارات،

فلذلك لا تقم باختيار إجابة تعتقد بأنها هي الإجابة المثالية، ولا تختر إجابة تعكس ما يفعله زملائك في القسم. حاول الإجابة بسرعة وبعناية، حيث يستغرق إكمال الاستبيان عادةً ما بين 7 دقائق و 10 دقائق. شكراً مسبقاً على التعاون.

الإستراتيجيات	لا تنطبق أو نادرا تقريبا %0	أحيانا أقل من %25	إلى حد ما تقريبا %50	غالبا أكثر من %75	دائما تقريبا %100
1					
أربط بين ما أعرفه و بين المعلومات الجديدة التي أتعلّمها في الإنجليزية.					
2					
استعمل الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة في جملة كي أتذكرها.					
3					
أربط ما بين صوت الكلمة الإنجليزية الجديدة مع صورة أو رسم للكلمة لتساعدني على تذكرها.					
4					
أتذكرُ الكلمة الإنجليزية الجديدة من خلال صنع صورة ذهنية لموقف قد تستخدم فيه هذه الكلمة.					
5					
استخدم الإقاع الموسيقي لتذكر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.					
6					
أستخدم بطاقات لكتابة المفردات الجديدة كي أتذكر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.					
7					
أقوم بتمثيل الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة بشكل حركي.					
8					
أراجع دروس اللغة الإنجليزية بكثرة.					
9					
أتذكر الكلمات أو العبارات الإنجليزية الجديدة عن طريق تذكر موقعها في الصفحة أو على السبورة أو على اللافتات في الشارع.					
10					
أقوم بترديد أو كتابة الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة عدة مرات.					
11					
أحاول التحدث مثل الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية.					
12					
أتمرّن على نطق أصوات اللغة الإنجليزية.					
13					
أستخدم الكلمات الإنجليزية التي أعرفها بطرق مختلفة.					
14					
أبادر بإجراء محادثات باللغة الإنجليزية.					
15					
أحرص على مشاهدة البرامج التلفزيونية و الأفلام السينمائية الناطقة بالإنجليزية.					
16					
أقرأ الكتب الإنجليزية من أجل التسلية والترفيه.					
17					
أستخدم اللغة الإنجليزية في كتابة الملاحظات والرسائل والمراسلات والتقارير.					
18					
عند قراءتي لنص باللغة الإنجليزية، أقرأه للمرة الأولى بسرعة، والثانية بتمهل وعناية.					
19					
أبحث عن كلمات في اللغة العربية مماثلة لتلك الكلمات الجديدة التي تعلمتها في اللغة الإنجليزية.					
20					
أحاول البحث عن أنماط (قواعد) في اللغة الإنجليزية.					
21					
أجد معنى الكلمة الإنجليزية عن طريق تقسيمها إلى مقاطع يسهل عليّ فهمها.					
22					
أحاول تجنب الترجمة الحرفية.					
23					
أقوم بإعداد ملخصات للمعلومات الجديدة التي أسمعها أو أقرأها باللغة الإنجليزية					
24					
أحاول فهم الكلمات الإنجليزية التي لا أعرفها عن طريق توقع معانيها.					
25					
عندما لا أجد الكلمات المناسبة أثناء التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية أعبر عنها بالإشارة.					

					أقوم باستخدام كلمات جديدة تعبر عن المعنى المراد إن كنت لا أعرف الكلمات الصحيحة لذلك في اللغة الإنجليزية	26
					أقوم بالقراءة باللغة الإنجليزية دون البحث عن معاني جميع الكلمات الجديدة.	27
					أثناء التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية، أحاول التنبؤ بما سيتحدث به الطرف الآخر.	28
					إذا لم استطع تذكر كلمة إنجليزية ما، أحاول استخدام كلمة أو عبارة قريبة لها في المعنى.	29
					أحاول قدر الإمكان إيجاد طرق عدة لاستخدام لغتي الإنجليزية.	30
					أحاول إدراك أخطائي في اللغة الإنجليزية، كي أتدركها، وأحسن من مستواي.	31
					أصغي بانتباه لمن يتحدث باللغة الإنجليزية.	32
					أحاول أن أجد ما يجعلني متعلماً أفضل للغة الإنجليزية.	33
					أعد برنامجي الدراسي بحيث يتوفر لدي الوقت اللازم لدراسة اللغة الإنجليزية.	34
					أبحث عن أشخاص يمكنني التحدث إليهم باللغة الإنجليزية.	35
					أبحث عن فرص للقراءة باللغة الإنجليزية قدر الإمكان.	36
					لدي أهداف واضحة لتحسين مهاراتي في اللغة الإنجليزية.	37
					أفكر بالتقدم الذي أحرزته في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.	38
					أحاول تهدئة نفسي كلما شعرت بالخوف من استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية.	39
					أشجع نفسي على التحدث بالإنجليزية حتى لو كنت خائفاً من أن أخطئ.	40
					أكافئ نفسي كلما أصبحت أفضل في اللغة الإنجليزية.	41
					أستطيع ملاحظة التوتر الذي يصيبني أثناء دراستي و استخدامي للغة الإنجليزية.	42
					أدون مشاعري في مفكرة خاصة بتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.	43
					أتحدث إلى شخص آخر عن شعوري عندما أتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.	44
					إذا لم أفهم بعض ما يُقال باللغة الإنجليزية، أطلب من المتحدث أن يبطئ في الحديث أو أن يعيد ثانيةً.	45
					أطلب من الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية تصحيحي عندما أتحدث.	46
					أمارس اللغة الإنجليزية مع الطلاب الآخرين.	47
					أطلب المساعدة من الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية.	48
					أطرح الأسئلة باللغة الإنجليزية.	49
					أحاول أن أتعلم عن ثقافة الناطقين الأصليين باللغة الإنجليزية (Native speakers culture).	50

## المعلومات الشخصية

- الجنس: ذكر  أنثى
- العمر: 17 سنة  18 سنة  19 سنة  20 سنة  أكثر من 20 سنة
- تخصصك في الثانوية: أدبي  علمي
- كيف تقيم مستواك العام في اللغة الانجليزية مقارنة بزملائك في السنة الأولى؟  
ممتاز  جيد  متوسط  ضعيف
- هل تستمتع بتعلم اللغة الانجليزية؟ نعم  لا  محايد

شكرا مرة أخرى على تعاونكم معنا.

## **Appendix E: A Sample of the Response Sheet for the SILL Questionnaire**







## Appendix F: Students' Interview

Dear Students,

The present interview is an attempt to collect data which will help us to learn more about you and your needs as a language student. In order to help us gain a more accurate picture of learning strategy use among our students, you are requested to answer the following questions and reflect your personal opinions.

### Interview guide

Name:

Sex:

Age:

- 1) How long have you been leaning English? (Including study at school)
- 2) Why do you want to learn English? (eg: job, immigration, further education)
- 3) Which learning strategies do you use most? Why?
- 4) Which learning strategies do you use least? Why?
- 5) Which language learning strategies do you find most useful for learning English? (for yourself)Why?
- 6) Do you think learning strategies can help you to learn English more effectively? How?
- 7) Are there any other learning strategies you have found to be effective? Which ones?

8) Do you think the strategies you use have been affected by your

(b) gender

(c) age

(d) other factors

If so, what effect have these factors had?

9) (a) What do you find most difficult about learning English?

(b) Which strategies have you used to help overcome these difficulties?

10) What could your school or your teachers do to help you use learning strategies more effectively?

**Thank you**

## **Appendix G: Teachers' Interview**

Dear Teachers,

The present interview is an attempt to collect data which will help us gain a more accurate picture of learning strategy use among our students. You are requested to answer the following questions and reflect your personal opinions.

### **Interview guide**

- 1) How long have you been teaching English?
- 2) Which learning strategies do your students use most? Why (in your opinion) ?
- 3) Which learning strategies do your students use least? Why (in your opinion)?
- 4) Which language learning strategies do you find most useful for learning English? Why?
- 5) Do you think learning strategies can help the students to learn English more effectively? How?
- 6) Are there any other learning strategies you have found to be effective? Which ones?
- 7) Do you think the strategies used by the students have been affected by their
  - (b) gender
  - (c) age
  - (d) other factors

**Thank you**

## Appendix H: Selected Extracts of Students' Responses Through Interview

student B. R. and C. Z. confirmed in their statement:

*"I have no idea about flash card", "I never use flash card because teachers never explain to us how to use it".*

student C. R. confirmed this observation:

*"Since the beginning of the academic year I have not stopped watching TV channels in English, especially BBC, CNN and MBC 2".*

student B. H. told us that:

*"English movies motivate me a lot, because it greatly improves my phonetics and enrich my vocabulary".*

student B. H. made us the following statement:

*"I do my best to talk like native English speakers, by imitating the movies actors".*

Student K. D. told us that:

*"I intend to use gestures to deal with my lack of vocabulary, but unfortunately I can't find the gestures which correspondents at best. For me the gestures are appropriate with common words such as: large, small, yesterday, tomorrow, all. But it is difficult to find the gesture for complicated words".*

student D.C. said that:

*"Our teacher of the oral module encourages us to use phrases instead of the words which we do not know. According to our teacher it is*

*important to convey the idea in a way or another, but to do so he advised us to not feel embarrassed".*

The student C. F. told us the following:

*"I try to carefully follow the oral teacher Madam D.R, She has a phonetic us a native speaker. The movements of her mouth as well as here gestures, motivates me to follow his speech."*

. One thing that we confirmed a student when he said the following:

*"To overcome the anxiety in the class, I often think about my colleagues who have a less English level than me".*

student made us the following statement:

*"Anxiety in learning English, yes I feel it especially when I have to expressed in front of my colleagues in the classroom."*

student Q.C. confirmed that:

*"Oral teacher almost insists in each course on the importance of asking questions and interrupted him if someone did not understand something."*

student told us the following:

*"I think I'm not supposed to ask my teacher to correct me when I'm talking, because it's part of his role as a teacher. When it comes to the colleagues in the class, I think it's difficult to ask someone who has same level as you to correct you! "*

## **Appendix I: Selected Extracts of Teachers' Responses Through Interview**

### **Statements of teacher 'A':**

*"I see more and more students who create bridges between what they are learning in class and their old vocabulary. This observation is more about grammar".*

*"I advice my students to find tips for get motivated, even if these tips appear simple such as saying: if I finish reading this book I will have the right to play soccer, or if I do my homework I have the right to follow the movie that I like."*

### **Statements of teacher 'B':**

*"very limited number of students who make the effort to connect the new concepts and rules learned with old knowledge, unfortunately many students are lazy."*

*"this strategy is used by students who have a Visual learning style".*

*"Advice students to follow the TV channels in English, such as BBC, for example".*

*"This strategy is very effective, but it requires a good level in French language, because there are a lot of bridges between the English and the French language, one thing that is not given to the 1st year EFL students".*

*"he talks with his students about the things such as, for example, organizing and planning their time and activities, setting goals, evaluating progress, seeking chances to practice the English language".*

**Statements of teacher 'B':**

*"In my experience of teaching English for several years, I can confirm that those students who have a good level of French guess quickly and easily the vocabulary in English. These students improve rapidly the learning of English in comparison to others. The only problem they have is the difficulty of linking the ideas and sentences".*

*"I have seen since I became a teacher that students are generally organized in small groups of three to five people in order to cooperate all the year. They share digital documents, they are part of the same group of the social media, and even in the class they sit near to the other."*

## **Appendix J: The Final Academic Results of the First Year EFL Students**



























## ملخص :

تم إعداد هذه المذكرة بهدف تقييم استخدام إستراتيجيات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية و معرفة ما إذا كان هناك إختلافات بين الطلبة في استخدام هذه الإستراتيجيات يمكن إيعازها لمتغيري جنس و مستوى الطلبة. أجريت الدراسة الميدانية على مستوى قسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة معسكر على طلبة السنة الأولى حيث تكونت العينة من 157 طالب و طالبة أكملوا كلهم استبيان أكسفورد. كما أجرينا مقابلات مع ثلاث مدرسين للسنة الأولى و عشرة طلبة. استخدمت معدلات نهاية السنة للطلبة بهدف تحديد المستوى.

أظهرت النتائج أن هناك استخدام متوسط لإستراتيجيات التعلم من طرف الطلبة حيث أن الإستراتيجيات الإدراكية هي الأكثر استخداما. كما بينت الدراسة أيضا أن هناك فروقات ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الطلبة لصالح الإناث في إستعمال الإستراتيجيات العاطفية، زيادة على ذلك فإن مستوى الطلبة يفسر بإستعمال الإستراتيجيات المعرفية و كذلك بإستعمال الإستراتيجيات الإدراكية.

**الكلمات الرئيسية:** إستراتيجيات تعلم اللغة, تقييم, طلبة, جامعة معسكر, نموذج أكسفورد.

## RESUME

Ce mémoire a pour objectif d'évaluer l'utilisation des stratégies d'apprentissage de la langue et de vérifier s'il y a des différences significatives entre les étudiants dans l'utilisation de ces stratégies et cela par rapport au genre et au niveau. La recherche a été menée auprès des étudiants de la première année EFL à l' Université de Mascara, dont l'échantillon est composé de 157 étudiants. Nous avons aussi, effectué trois enseignants de la première année ainsi que dix étudiants ont été interrogés. En outre, nous avons exploité les moyennes de la fin d'année des étudiants afin de déterminer leur niveau. Les résultats ont révélé que l'utilisation globale de LLS par les étudiants est moyenne où les stratégies métacognitives sont les stratégies les plus fréquemment utilisées. Par ailleurs, il y a des différences statistiquement significatives entre les étudiants dans l'utilisation des stratégies affectives en faveur des étudiantes. En plus, le niveau des étudiants est expliqué par deux catégories de stratégies à savoir: les stratégies cognitives et les stratégies métacognitives.

**Mots clés:** Stratégie d'apprentissage de la langue, l'évaluation, SILL, étudiants, université de Mascara.

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to assess the students' language learning strategy (LLS) use, to check whether there are significant differences in the students' LLS use regarding gender, and regarding proficiency level. The research was conducted with the first year EFL students at the university of Mascara. A total of 157 students have completed Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Three first year EFL teachers and ten students were interviewed. In addition, the final grades were obtained from the English department administration to determine the students' proficiency level. The findings revealed that the students' overall use of LLSs is medium where metacognitive strategies are the most frequently used strategies. Additionally, there are statistically significant differences between male and female students in the use of affective strategies which has a significant difference in favor of female. Moreover, the students achievement is explained by two categories of strategies namely: Cognitive strategies and Metacognitive strategies.

**Key words:** Language learning strategy, assessment, students, University of Mascara.

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FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Abstract of the dissertation entitled:

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**Assessing Language Learning Strategy Use:  
The Case of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year EFL Students at the University of  
Mascara**

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Teachers and educators of second language (L2) usually complain about non-satisfactory language performance of L2 learners. This topic complaints prompted researchers in the field of learning and teaching L2 in an attempt to find the reasons behind this problem and propose solutions. Until the 1970s, researchers focused on evaluating the methods and materials of L2 teaching. However, since the beginning of 1970s, the focus was on investigating the social, psychological and affective variables that promote or hinder the L2 success and achievement. Among these variables are: motivation, attitudes, learning styles, and learning strategies. Research has presented evidence that these variables correlate with success in L2 learning.

The early research about the differences in learning among L2 learners have motivated second language acquisition researchers to explore the basis of these differences with the goal of providing instruction in order to facilitate learning. Researchers have tried to determine the characteristics of "good language learner". Rubin (1975), and Chamot (1987) identified strategies used by successful language learners in order to facilitate second language learning. As Oxford (1994) stated that early researchers tended to make lists of strategies presumed to be essential for all "good L2 learners.

The purpose of the present study is to assess LLS use of the 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL students at the University of Mascara as reported in Oxford's Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) and to explore the effect of proficiency level and gender on reported strategy use. The present study differs from other SILL studies in that the majority of LLS studies have been conducted on learners of English in an L2 setting and the present study explores the effect of two variables (proficiency level and gender) on the frequency of strategy use in an EFL setting. More specifically, the purpose of the present study is twofold: (a) to assess 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL learners' use of LLSs on two SILL levels: overall use and use of each of the six categories of strategies; and (b) to explore the effect of strategy use on language proficiency. Thus, three questions of the study may be addressed as the following:

1. What are the LLS used by the first year EFL students at the University of Mascara as reported in the (SILL)?
2. Are there differences in the students' language learning strategy use regarding gender?
3. Are there differences in the students' LLS use regarding their academic achievement?

# 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

## 1.1. Introduction

The researcher have to look at many of the central issues on the strategies of learning the language and its use assessment; however, it is necessary first and foremost to achieve a working definition of what is the language learning strategy (LLS). Later, a list of LLSs characteristics is discussed, this latest gives a background for classification systems of learning strategies proposed by different scholars. After that, it is essential to mention the factors affecting learner's LLS choice followed by a detailed review of previous international researches on students' LLSs. Finally, since the current study related to the dual concepts of language learning strategies use and its assessment, various methods for data collection with respect to LLS are presented.

## 1.2. Definition of Language Learning Strategies (LLSs)

Rigney (1978), and Rubin (1987), define language learning strategies as behaviors, steps, or techniques that language learners apply to facilitate language learning. While, O'Malley *et al* (1985) based their definition on Rigney's (1978) definition of learning strategies as procedures which facilitate acquisition, retention, retrieval and performance. O'Malley & Chamot (1990) define learning strategies as "*the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information*" (p. 1). While Rubin (1987) stated that learning strategies "*are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly*" (p. 22).

Oxford, the author of many publications and articles concerning this issue, expands the definition of language learning strategies as "[...] *specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations*" (1990: 8). Cohen (2007) agrees with Oxford's point of view and adds that the purpose of language learner strategies is to enhance learning, to perform specific tasks, to solve specific problems, to make learning easier, faster, and more enjoyable and to compensate for a deficit in learning.

## 1.3. Characteristics of Language Learning Strategies

Even though the definitions used for language learning strategies are not uniform among the scholars in the field, there are a number of basic characteristics accepted by them.

Oxford (1990) summarizes her view of LLS by listing twelve key features below as they:

- Contribute to the main goal, communicative competence.
- Allow learners to become more self-directed.
- Expand the role of teachers.
- Are problem oriented.
- Are specific actions taken by the learner.
- Involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive.

- Support learning both directly and indirectly.
- Are not always observable.
- Are often conscious.
- Can be taught.
- Are flexible.
- Are influenced by a variety of factors.

(Oxford, 1990, cited in Jhaish, 2009, p. 32)

#### **1.4. Classification Systems of Language Learning Strategies**

In an attempt to produce a classification scheme with mutually exclusive categories, Rubin (1981) divided LLS into two main groups of strategies (direct and indirect), then, he distinguishes further between eight subgroups of strategies: 1) Clarification/verification, 2) monitoring, 3) memorization, 4) guessing/inductive inferencing, 5) deductive reasoning, 6) practice, 7) Creating opportunities for practice, 8) production tricks. While O'Malley and his colleagues developed taxonomy of their own, identifying 26 strategies which they divided into three categories: metacognitive, cognitive and social. The metacognitive and cognitive categories correspond approximately to Rubin's indirect and direct strategies. However, the addition of the social mediation category was an important step in the direction of acknowledging the importance of interactional strategies in language learning.

From an extensive review of the literature, Oxford gathered a large number of language learning strategies and, on the basis of factor analyses, divided them into six groups:

Direct strategies

1. Memory strategies (which relate to how students remember language)
2. Cognitive strategies (which relate to how students acquire knowledge about language)
3. Compensation strategies (which enable students to make up for limited knowledge)

Indirect strategies

4. Meta-cognitive strategies (relating to how students manage the learning process)
5. Affective strategies (relating to students' feelings)
6. Social strategies (which involve learning by interaction with others).

These six categories underlie the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) used by Oxford and others for a great deal of research in the learning strategy field.

#### **1.5. Factors Affecting Learner's LLS Choice**

Oxford (1990) synthesized existing research on how the following factors influence the choice of strategies used among students learning a second language.

**Gender** Females reported greater overall strategy use than males in many studies (although sometimes males surpassed females in the use of a particular strategy).



**Motivation** More motivated students tended to use more strategies than less motivated ones, and the particular reason for studying the language was important in the choice of strategies.

**Type of task** The nature of the task helped determine the strategies naturally employed to carry out the task.

**Age and L2 stage** Students of different ages and stages of L2 learning used different strategies, with certain strategies often being employed by older or more advanced students.

**Learning style** Learning style often determined the choice of L2 learning strategies. Analytic-style students preferred strategies such as contrastive analysis, and dissecting words, while global students used strategies to find meaning without knowing all the words.

**Cultural background** Rote memorization and other forms of memorization were more prevalent among some Asian students than among students from other cultural backgrounds. Certain other cultures also appeared to encourage this strategy among learners.

**Attitudes and beliefs** These were reported to have a profound effect on the strategies learners choose, with negative attitudes and beliefs often causing poor strategy use.

**Tolerance of ambiguity** Students who were more tolerant of ambiguity used different LLS in some instances more than did students who were less tolerant of ambiguity.

(Adapted from Oxford, 1994)

## 1.6. Previous Research into Assessment of LLS Use

Since the present study focuses on the effect of proficiency and gender, this review of the literature will be limited to studies that investigated these two variables. A number of studies have investigated the relationship between language proficiency level and strategy use. Overall, these studies reported that more proficient learners reported higher frequency of strategy use than did less proficient peers. For instance, O'Malley et al (1985) found that learners at all levels reported the use of a great variety of learning strategies. High-achieving students reported greater use of meta-cognitive strategies. They concluded that the more successful students are probably able to use greater meta-cognitive control over their learning. While, Ehrman and Oxford (1995) indicated that successful students preferred to use cognitive strategies more frequently in their study. Green and Oxford (1995) discovered that high-achieving students used all kinds of LLS more frequently than low-achieving students.

On the other hand, Kaylani (1996) used an Arabic version of the SILL to assess strategy use by a sample of 255 high school seniors (12<sup>th</sup> graders) in Jordan. She studied the effect of gender on strategy use. She found that “female students used significantly more memory, cognitive, compensatory and affective strategies than male students.” (p. 84). Studies which have examined the relationship between sex and strategy use have come to mixed conclusions. It might be concluded that although men

and women do not always demonstrate differences in language learning strategy use, where differences are found women tend to use more language learning strategies than men.

### **1.7. Assessment Tools for Language Learning Strategy Use**

Over the past four decades, researchers on the field of LLS have used a number of methods for assessing LLS use among language learners. The reason behind employing different data collection techniques is that the identification of each type of strategy requires a different assessment technique. Therefore, researchers must pay attention while designing the data collection methodology of their studies (Jhaish, 2009, p. 64). Since the most of learning strategies are unobservable, the only way to figure out whether students are using learning strategies is to ask them. In addition, self-report data are used to identify LLS use because observation does not pick up mental processes. Researchers have asked language learners to describe their learning processes and strategies through interviews, questionnaires, written diaries and journals, and think-aloud protocols. Each of these methods has limitations, but each provides important insights into unobservable mental learning strategies (Cohen, 1998).

### **1.8. Conclusion**

In the literature review on LLS, researchers investigated differences in LLS depending on: 1) demographic factors addressing different target populations; 2) methods of data collection; and 3) other related variables such as gender, motivation, proficiency/ achievement. Most of the Literature review pointed out that investigations with language learners indicated that the most successful students tend to use learning strategies that are suitable to the task, material and needs. It is also clear that the most often tested variable is gender and how it affects strategy use. Actually, gender was tested as a second independent variable in most of the studies mentioned in the literature and has so much attention in the field of strategy research.

## **2. TEACHING/LEARNING SITUATION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This research work aims at assessing the LLS use among first year EFL university students. For this purpose, it is useful to present the educational context in which our targeted students develop starting from a general overview of ELT in the Algerian educational system to a more specific one dealing with the instruction received by our learners at the university. Besides, the research design and data collection procedures are presented in this chapter. First, it highlights the research questions, describes the instruments used and gives the profile of the subjects in question. The research questions have been translated into two different analytical tools: the first one is a

questionnaire addressed to first-year EFL university students and the second one interviews addressed to both university teachers and first-year EFL students.

## **2.2. The Status of English Language in Algeria**

The English language status in Algeria exposes different issues, analyzing the sociolinguistic situation should be the first step to do in order to understand the status of English language in that social environment. The researcher attempts to investigate how and at which level English is taught in Algeria. The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is very rich and complex too because there are different languages used in the Algerian society. First of all, the Modern Standard Arabic is the official language of Algeria. It is a standard language with its grammar rules and dictionary. Then, the Algerian Arabic which refers to the dialects used for daily communication. It is a non-standard language since it has no written form, no grammatical rules, no dictionary, and it is not official. Furthermore, we find the Tamazight which started to be taught at schools, and it has a national status. In addition, French is considered as a second language, which is actually taught at the 3<sup>rd</sup> year primary school and it influenced the Algerians daily communication because of colonial reasons. However, English is considered as a foreign language.

## **2.3. The Algerian Educational System: An Overview**

After the independency, French dominated as the language of instruction while English was taught in the third year of secondary school. In the 1970's, the government started the fundamental school which insured the standard norm of nine year schooling. The objective of the fundamental school was to promote the spiritual elements of socialism by teaching the child economics and social sciences based on Arab-Islamic sources and values. However, the extremely large quantity of knowledge given and the study of empirical sciences goes beyond the child's abilities who rather needs at this stage to acquire the basic skills of a language.

Since then, the Algerian school went through a number of reforms. In the early seventies, the authorities committed in the process of “Arabization”. The purpose of this process was to increase the use of Standard Arabic replacing French. The “Arabization” reform started in the lower levels of education to be lengthened, later in the eighties, to higher education. Yet, it should be mentioned that this process was introduced without effective preparation. Furthermore, the supremacy of instruction through MSA and the limited teaching time allocated to French and English language teaching led the younger generations to encounter serious learning problems in both foreign languages.

## **2.4. ELT at University**

Concerning English language teaching at university, the learning conditions offered to EFL students do not aim at promoting any achievement in language learning because of the lack of appropriate equipment. Large classes with mixed abilities is another problem in our universities, students have small opportunities for self-

expression. Another important aspect is that students' contact with the English language is limited in time and it is not used outside the language classroom. As a result, these students have a low proficiency level in English.

At their entrance to university, students will have accumulated an English learning experience of seven years, during which they have been exposed to a rich program. Unfortunately, most Algerian learners show little competence in English compared to the amount of instruction they have had. An alarming situation appeals for careful thinking and investigation about the source of the low achievement problem. Therefore, the passage from the old (classic) system to the new system is a necessity because the old system "has failed to the challenges imposed by the evolution of the economics, political and social situation. The LMD system is designed to ensure easy mobility of students. Unfortunately, the major drawback to the success of the reform is the big number of students.

### **2.5. The English Language Department: A Brief Overview**

The present investigation has been carried out at the Department of English Language at the University of Mascara. In the department, a group of courses on the English language studies are offered to EFL students. These courses aims at reinforcing language awareness of the new baccalaureate holders, the first two academic years are basically devoted to core subjects, namely grammar, phonetics , written expression, oral expression ; the program also offers courses in linguistics, literature and civilization. In addition, research methodology course is offered and devoted to research techniques for the sake of preparing students for empirical research. However, it should also be noted that the number of students enrolled in the English department is witnessing a continuous rise. The noticeable rise in the number of the students choosing English language studies, largely explains the popularity of English language among today's generation. Like many other Foreign languages Departments in Algeria, the total number of female students out numbers than of male students. The curriculum at university level is more flexible, it provides only general guidelines for each modular course and it is up to teachers to collectively or individually design the content of the course.

### **2.6. Research Action in TEFL**

An action research is a reflective process that leads the researcher to discover solutions to a problem or to conduct exploration to a given situation. In other words, Brown and Rodgers (2004) define research as an exploration of experience of one kind or another, sometimes formal and technical, but not necessarily so. They add that the good way of understanding the nature of research is to first experience it by doing it, initially in a simple and elementary way. Accordingly, Ourghi (2002) states that: "an excellent reflective means of investigating a specific aspect of the teaching process and learning outcome" (cited in Djebbari, 2009). In the same sense McNiff and Whitehead (2002) consider action research as common-sense approach to personal and

professional development that enables practitioners everywhere to investigate and evaluate their work, and to create their own theories of practice (cited in *ibid*).

## **2.7. Presentation of the Purpose of the Study and Hypotheses**

The purpose of this study is to assess the language learning strategies that learners use, and to reveal whether there is a relationship among language learning strategies and the academic achievement among the first year EFL students at the University of Mascara. In addition, this study aims at finding out whether there are significant differences in the language learning strategy use regarding students' gender. The research tries to answer the following questions:

1. What are the LLS used by the first year EFL students at the University of Mascara as reported in the (SILL)?
2. Is there a difference in the students' language learning strategy use regarding gender?
3. Is there a difference in the students' LLS use regarding their academic achievement?

In this perspective we have developed the following hypothesis that we have tried to check throughout the chapter three.

H1: 1st year EFL students at the University of Mascara use different Language Learning Strategies

H2: There are differences in the usage of LLS between male and female of 1st year EFL students at the University of Mascara.

H3: There are differences in the use of LLSs at the three levels of academic achievement of 1st year EFL of Mascara University.

## **2.8. Presentation of the Research Instruments**

In order to measure strategy use, Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) for ESL/EFL learners (Version 7.0) was used. The items were given scores on the basis of a five point Likert scale. A background questionnaire was used to collect information about the language learners. The selection of this taxonomy has been made on two grounds. First, it has been used to assess strategy use in more than 15 studies involving EFL/ESL learners from many countries and cultural backgrounds. Second, its reliability and validity have been widely documented. An Arabic translation version of the SILL was used to measure strategy use. This 50-item taxonomy covers six broad categories. For the statistical analysis of the data the raw scores were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Programs, version 22.

The interview is the second instrument of data collection that was used. Therefore, two semi-structured interviews were designed, one intended to the students and the other for the 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL teachers. The interview addressed to students is mainly based on (SILL). Students are requested to answer 10 open-ended questions. On its part, the interview reserved for teachers seeks to discover problems that students

encounter when they learn English. Indeed, the opinion of teachers is crucial, because it is based on their own observations and interactions with the students. Teachers are able also to tell us about the progress in learning of students and their preferences in matters of learning strategies.

The assessment of strategies used for the learning of English as a foreign language is not useful if it is not connected to the students' proficiency level. According to the literature it is possible to determine students' proficiency in two main ways: the use of tests or the use of marks obtained by the students during the academic year. This second technique is rather objective because it is based on the objective evaluation of teachers throughout the academic year. The statistical analysis of our study uses the students' grades which are provided by the administration of the English Department.

## **2.9. Procedures of Data Collection**

After the researcher's explanation of the purpose of the study and of the questionnaire and the time required for the response. Participants completed the SILL in class in 20 minutes under the supervision of the regular class instructors under conditions of anonymity and confidentiality. The students were reminded that they were to answer in terms of how well the statements describe them and that there were no right or wrong answers to these statements.

The participants also provided information about their age and gender. It is noted that students were very motivated to complete the survey, because they consider that the topic interest them. A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was used to determine variation in the means of reported strategy use (dependent variable) across the entire SILL as well as that of each of the six categories of strategies by language proficiency level and gender (independent variables). To test the SILL's reliability of the Arabic translation version, the researcher also used Cronbach-alpha which was found to be .902. All scores are higher than 60% which shows the internal consistency of the items. We remained that we don't need a pre-test for this questionnaire because it is a measurement scale of high reliability and used in several research as we showed above.

## **2.10. The Sample**

This study was conducted with 176 first year EFL students (76.7% female and 23.3% male). Almost 90.9% of participants were between 17 and 20 years old. 27.3% surveyed students believe that they have a good level in English, 61.9% have a medium level and 10.8% that they have a low level. 61.9% of learners stated that they enjoy when they learn English, 4.5% don't enjoy and 12.5% are neutral. All the subjects had studied English formally for 8 years.

## **2.11. Conclusion**

The awareness of the English language importance has largely favored the promotion of ELT in Algeria. This chapter has tried to provide a description and analysis of the teaching/learning situation in Algeria. This description has embraced

the early EFL school years of the learner till his admission to university to shed light on his educational background. Since this research work aims at assessing the language learning strategy use among first year EFL university students, the research design and data collection procedures are presented along with the research questions, the research instruments and the profile of the subjects in question. The next chapter will deal with the results of this investigative study.

### **3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

We will now report on the results of our practical study that we have achieved in the English Department at the University of Maseara. The research was conducted according to several steps. First, the research objective was developed. Then, the contact with the English Language Department at the University of Maseara to prepare for the conduction of the study. After that, the preparation of the data collection instruments and information sources (questionnaires and interviews for students, interviews with teachers, deliberation of the 1st year EFL students). Later, collection of data by questionnaires distribution and conducting interviews. After that it comes the phase of coding the questionnaires and analyzing the data collected through SPSS 22, along with analysis of interviews conducted with students and teachers by the manual classification of responses according to the strategies adopted in this study. Finally, Interpretation and commentary on the results achieved.

#### **3.2. The Overall Usage of Learning Strategies**

The overall use of language learning strategies by the subjects has been presented by the mean and standard deviation of strategy use among all the subjects. For this purpose, Oxford (1990) developed a scale, which reflects the level of strategy usage: (1) High (3.5-5.0), (2) Medium (2.5-3.4), and (3) Low (1.0-2.4). The average of strategy use ranged from a high 3.72 to a low of 2.79, while the overall mean for the sample was 3.22. As for strategy categories, meta-cognitive strategies were the most frequently used strategies ( $M=3.72$ ) and memory strategies were the least frequently used ( $M=2.79$ ), while between the two in descending order were social strategies ( $M=3.39$ ), compensation strategies ( $M= 3.36$ ), affective strategies ( $M=3.12$ ), and cognitive strategies ( $M=2.99$ ).

#### **3.3. Strategy Use and Students Gender**

Results related to the third research questions (What is the relationship between male and female students' use of English language learning strategies?) reveal an overall medium range of strategy use (males:  $M = 3.15$  and females:  $M = 3.25$ ). The differences between the mean scores of male and female students in regard to the overall strategy use were very small. Findings also indicate that both male and female learners use meta-cognitive strategies (1<sup>st</sup> Rank) and social strategies (2<sup>nd</sup> Rank) the

most and memory strategies the least. It is found also that there is no significant differences between male and female learners in the use of the overall strategies except a significant difference in the usage of the affective strategies ( $Sig=0.008$ ). Also, there were no significant differences between male and female students in the use of the five from six strategies developed by Oxford.

### **3.4. Strategy Use and Proficiency Level**

It is clear after the analysis that student's achievement is explained by two categories of strategies, namely: Cognitive strategies ( $F=3.605$ ,  $p=0.029$ ) and Meta-cognitive strategies ( $F=4.167$ ,  $p=0.017$ ). What drives us to say that more students in 1st year EFL use the Meta-cognitive and Cognitive strategies more their achievement is high. We can conclude that the variation in the achievement level of the first year EFL students in Mascara University is explained by these two strategies, so these strategies predicted positively students' achievement. The results founded here are congruent with a number of the previous LLSs studies conducted in many countries, such as the U.S., and Asia (Anderson, 2005; Huang & Chen, 2009). More importantly, the findings are consistent with the findings of many studies in that students with high English proficiency level employed a greater diversity and more frequency of English learning strategies that did students with low English proficiency level.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

The findings reported above show that the overall use of LLS by the students was found medium and that students gender have statistically a significant effect on frequency of overall strategy use. With regard to its effect on the use of each of the six categories of strategies, gender has a main effect on only one category (affective strategies) in favor of females. The findings reported also that students with a high level use strategies more than those with medium level and those with a medium level use strategies more than those with a low level. Consequently, this means that whenever the students use English language learning strategies frequently their level of achievement is higher.

## **4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The research results compiled earlier in response to the research questions illustrate that there is a relationship between students' use of LLS, students' gender and academic achievement level. Following are some recommendations to advance the learners' use of LLSs and (as a result) the academic achievement.

- 1) Although students may be dissimilar in their knowledge of strategies, understanding about assignments for successful strategy use should be submitted to direct them to become more determined learners of the target language. Teachers may present the LLS and explain how to take suitable strategies to fit students' needs in various learning tasks. Additionally, many applications would help students well know the different learning strategies, then they grown-up using those numerous strategies



spontaneously. This implication would be connected to the idea of autonomous learning concentrating on personal needs and goals.

2) Teachers and students should raise their knowledge of these different strategies through suitable training for both groups. Better student awareness about strategies can guide them to be certain, self-reliant, and successful language learners (Abu-Radwan, 2011). Successful language learners have the capacity to connect specific categories of LLS in practical manner according to their own learning needs.

3) Teachers can take direct actions in language classrooms in terms of combining explicit and implicit strategy instructions into the daily lessons (Cohen, 2003).

4) Explicit training in strategy use is fundamental, because it permits students with different competence levels to exercise a long list of these strategies.

5) The findings revealed that high proficient students recorded more strategy use than low-proficient students. This signify that learners at different levels have different needs. The teacher have to be explicit in promoting knowledge for low-proficiency learners, this will be useful to enhance understanding of the what and how of successful language learning.

6) Researchers have supported that strategy training should be combined into language curriculum (e.g., Khalil, 2005; Abu-Radwan, 2011). Therefore, teachers should include different tasks that target strategies which are basic for success in learning a second language. The fact that students with various proficiency levels make use of different learning strategies should lead the improvement of instructional materials (Chamot & O'Malley, 1995).

7) Materials such as textbooks should be evaluated by the teachers in order to see whether they already include language learning strategies or language learning strategy training.

After presenting the recommendations here are some suggestions for further researches:

1) The literature review presented in this study revealed that, in the area of Arab EFL in general and Algerian EFL in particular, LLSs have not been investigated enough. Therefore, further researchers are highly recommended to conduct experimental, and cross-sectional studies on Arab EFL learners in general and Algerian EFL students in particular. These types of studies can provide a better understanding of Arab and Algerian EFL learners' LLS use.

2) Other studies should investigate the LLS use of EFL learners at different ages and different educational levels, i.e. middle school, secondary school.

3) More research on the factors that affect strategy choice would be valuable. Learning style is a crucial factor, along with age, nationality, beliefs, and previous educational and cultural experiences.

4) Future researchers may use multiple-method approaches such as observation, think-aloud, and diaries.

5) Investigating the effect of training on LLS use, including the success of use, is a vital issue to take into consideration in further research.

At the end of this chapter it is necessary that learning strategies research continue, for a better understanding of the learning and teaching process. Language learning strategy instruction can take part in the improvement of learner autonomy and increase teacher competence, still, research in particular language learning framework is essential to understand it and to improve second language acquisition. LLS are instruments that learners use to raise their language learning. They are one of the flexible element that make distinction between successful and less successful language learners. The researches on learning strategies can be done in different ways according to the researcher approach. This studies attempt to determine and examine how language is learned. The findings aid to inform language teachers how to prepare less proficient learners to become more proficient in language learning. As a consequence of that, there have been different language learning strategies instruction plans, i.e. awareness training, and strategies-based instruction.

The instructions for realizing strategy training programs present a collection of alternatives in order to make the training fit all the students. The crucial concerns in planning a strategy training program are the students' needs, the accessible resources (e.g., time, money, materials), and the usefulness of administering this type of instruction. Yet, it is so substantial to pick out an instructional model that presents the strategies to the students and increases recognition of their learning alternatives; teaches them to recognize, apply, assess, and transmit strategies to new learning status; and encourages learner autonomy.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

Many studies have proved that second language proficiency/achievement is related to language learning strategies (e.g. Intaraprasert, 2000; Oxford, 1989). Hence, to promote the learners' efficient language learning, language learning strategies is an essential point to pay attention to. One way to help students improve learning outcomes is to identify the language learning strategy they use. Added to that, there is sufficient evidence that language learning strategy use benefit many students not only high achieving students, but also underachieving ones (Chamot, 1996; Cohen, 1998). This benefit could empower students to be more successful in their language learning.

This dissertation was a descriptive study based on a survey research. It is divided into four parts. The first chapter provides the base for the research as it tries to cover the field of language learning strategy. The second chapter tries to provide a description and analysis of the teaching/learning situation in Algeria in order to shed light on the students' educational background. The research design and data collection

procedures are presented along with the research questions, the research instruments and the profile of the subjects in question.

As for the third chapter, the relevant data obtained were presented in order to answer three research questions. Consequently, The findings revealed that the overall use of LLS by the students is medium. As for strategy categories, meta-cognitive strategies was the most frequently used strategy (M=3.72) and memory strategy was the least frequently used (M=2.79). The interviews analyze support these findings. Furthermore, there are statistically no significant differences between male and female students in the use of the overall strategies and in the use of the six categories of strategies except in the use of the affective strategies which has a significant difference in favor of female (Sig=0.011). From the analysis of the correlation between the academic achievement results and the students' learning strategy use , it was shown that there are statistically a significant and positive relationship between the students' academic achievement and three of language learning strategies (Affective strategies, Cognitive strategies and Meta-cognitive strategies. Moreover the student's achievement is explained by two categories of strategies, namely: Cognitive strategies and Meta-cognitive strategies. So these strategies effect positively students' achievement. The findings reported above confirm totally the first hypotheses and it support partially the second and the third hypotheses.

Since language learners use language learning strategies to complete a language learning task or to solve a problem, Thus, for guiding learners towards the effective use of learning strategies, many researchers suggests to integrate Language Learning Strategy Instruction (LLSI) into daily language lessons. Therefore, the last chapter provides an overview of language learning strategies instruction and discusses the definitions, importance, types of language learning strategies instructions, options for providing LLSI, and models of LLSI, implementing LLSI into language classroom. By the end of this chapter, pedagogical implications, and recommendation for further research are presented in turn.