ABSTRACT

THE LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES ENGLISH AND FRENCH
PROGRAM STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO USE TO IMPROVE
THEIR ENGLISH COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

By

Luis Carlos Lasso Montenegro

ABSTRACT

Over the past years there has been a shifting premise regarding the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language which focuses on learners rather than on teachers and the strategies students use to learn a language and improve their communicative competence.

This descriptive study is concerned with language learning strategies in the field of teacher education and its overall objective is aimed at describing the language learning strategies the students of the English and French program of the University of Nariño use to improve their English communicative competence. Therefore, this work entails a thorough description of the research problem concerning learning strategy use in an EFL setting along with a proper review of the theoretical background that relates to it. Furthermore, the methodology used for conducting the study, a precise examination of research findings, and relevant conclusions and recommendations are also presented hereby.

The main proposal emerging from this descriptive study is intended to highlight the prominent role learning strategies play in the learning of English as a foreign language and foster both university professors and student teachers to become aware of the importance of learning strategy instruction in EFL teacher education.

RESUMEN

Durante varios años ha existido una novedosa premisa con respecto al aprendizaje y a la enseñanza del inglés como legua extranjera la cual no centra su atención en los profesores, sino en los estudiantes y en las estrategias que ellos utilizan para aprender un idioma y mejorar su competencia comunicativa.

Este estudio descriptivo corresponde a las estrategias de aprendizaje de una lengua en el campo de la educación pedagógica cuyo objetivo general es el de describir las estrategias de aprendizaje que los estudiantes del programa de Licenciatura en Inglés-Francés de la Universidad de Nariño utilizan con el fin de mejorar su competencia comunicativa en Inglés. Por consiguiente, este trabajo incluye una descripción completa sobre el problema de investigación relacionado con el uso de estrategias de aprendizaje, además la revisión apropiada del contexto teórico. Adicionalmente, en este documento se expone la metodología utilizada para realizar el estudio, el análisis preciso de los resultados de la investigación y finalmente las conclusiones y recomendaciones pertinentes.

La propuesta principal manifestada en este estudio descriptivo pretende acentuar el papel prominente que juegan las estrategias de aprendizaje en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera y promover que tanto profesores como estudiantes de la universidad sean concientes de la importancia que conllevaría una instrucción sobre estrategias de aprendizaje dentro de la educación pedagógica.

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CHAPTER 1. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In this chapter a problematic situation related to the learning of English as a foreign language is presented according to the overall features outlined in a descriptive research. It contains, therefore, a general description of the problem, the tentative problem statement, the problem analysis, the problem statement, the problem evaluation, the delimitations, the geographical location and the objectives. Besides, the significance, the purpose and the limitations of the study will be all explained hereby.

Introduction to the Problem

By drawing on EFL teacher education when studying at the university, a common disquieting situation concerning most of the student teachers from different semesters in the English and French program has been identified. It turns out that many of the EFL students including both those who have already finished the degree in languages and those who are currently studying so as to become non-native teachers of English have certain weaknesses and shortcomings in their English proficiency. It might even be said that many non-native English-speaking teachers have an inferiority complex caused by the defects in their English-language proficiency and about some kind of cognitive dissonance due to the double role they play as both teachers and learners of the same subject (Medgyes, 2001).

The reasons why EFL student teachers do not attain an essential communicative competence in English entirely depends on a wide range of external and internal factors such as motivation, age, physical conditions, resources, learner's aptitudes and attitudes, teacher's role, psychological factors and so forth. In addition to this, successful foreign language learning and language proficiency are considerably influenced by one of the most important factors in learning process: language learning strategies. As Oxford

(1990) states, language learning strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence.

Bearing in mind the situation stated above, this paper intends to find out the ways in which EFL student teachers seek to improve their English proficiency by themselves focusing this research on their own language strategies.

Description of the Problematic Situation

Building on the university experience as an unwitting peer-observer inside the classroom and because of the outdoor interaction with student teachers from different semesters of the English and French program over the past four years, it might be stated that not all but a number of the non-native students of English have certain difficulties and weaknesses in their English-language competence, such as: the lack of grammar and vocabulary knowledge, the great deal of mistakes in writing, the misunderstanding at listening and above all the wrong pronunciation and poor fluency at speaking. The before-listed knowledge gaps which are related to the four language skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking) vary considerably from student to student and from course to course. These observations are supported by authors like Medgyes (2001) who states that: "when asked to identify the major source of difficulty, most non-native English-speaking teachers mentioned vocabulary, together with idiomatic and appropriate use of English. This was followed by problems in speaking and fluency, pronunciation and listening. Grammar featured to a far lesser extent and so did writing skills, whereas reading skills and cultural knowledge were not even mentioned".

Furthermore, a relevant aspect in this problematic situation is that many of the EFL students of the university who have chosen, as a profession, to become non-native

English teachers are apparently not interested in improving their English level on their own, some of them are not keen on individual language learning and bound themselves to learn as much as the professor teaches inside a classroom without adopting the role of active language learners. According to Wesche (1979) quoted by Dickinson (1987) successful learners are those who use their exposure time in the L2 actively, and who seek to extend this out of the classroom; who actively rehearse new material; who exploit its rich associational possibilities both through conscious association-making and meaningful practice in the L2, and who seek knowledge about the target language. Furthermore, proponents argue that at least one difference between good language learners and the rest is that good learners have developed effective language strategies (Dickinson, 1987).

Once again, it is clear how student teachers' English competence is affected by the insufficient use of individual learning strategies which hinders them from becoming autonomous and self-directed towards learning. As Oxford (2001) asserts, all language learning strategies are related to the features of control, goal-directness autonomy and self-efficacy; learning strategies help students become more autonomous and autonomy requires conscious control of one's own learning process.

<div align="center">Tentative Problem Statement</div>

Which language learning strategies do EFL students use to improve their communicative competence?

<div align="center">Problem Analysis</div>

As far as English learning as a foreign language is concerned, an important factor which has a remarkable influence on students' learning process is without any doubt learning strategies, along with the highly positive results they could bring about in English-language competence. Oxford (1990) states that the development of

communicative competence requires realistic interaction among learners using meaningful contextualized language; learning strategies help learners participate actively in such authentic communication; and such strategies operate in both general and specific ways to encourage the development of communicative competence. Moreover, Oxford (2001) quotes: research shows that greater strategy use is often related to higher levels of language proficiency (O'Malley and Chamot 1990; Oxford and Ehrman 1995; Oxford 1996; Cohen 1997).

As it can be seen, it is important to describe the learning strategies university students use to learn about how they try to enhance their communicative competence by themselves bearing in mind certain factors which also play an influential role during the learning of English as a foreign language. Existing research on language learning strategies has identified that factors such as motivation and purpose for learning, age, gender, general learning style, and task requirements among others affect the strategy choice. More highly motivated learners, for example, use a considerably greater range of appropriate strategies than do less motivated learners; task requirements help determine strategic choice and older learners may use somewhat different strategies than younger learners (Oxford, 1990).

Furthermore, gender has also been identified as an individual learner's difference which has a remarkable effect on strategy use. Prior studies using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford and Ehrman (1987) with both students and instructors at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute reached the conclusion that females not only used learning strategies significantly more often than males but also a wider variety of strategies for language learning (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990).

Therefore, this descriptive study bears on gender as a differential factor so as to identify the way male and female student teachers of the University of Nariño seek to improve and enhance their English competence through learning strategies application.

Problem Statement

Which language learning strategies do English and French program students of the University of Nariño use to improve their English communicative competence?

Problem Evaluation

The problem, which has been fairly presented hereby, is steadily related to the learning of English as a foreign language and all the information concerning the problem is thoroughly complete and relevant. On the other hand, it is plain to understand how important language learning strategies are in order to acquire a good English proficiency as well as the influence they have on the students' learning process. Undoubtedly, this problem was wholly researchable in terms of locations, people, time, data-collection, budget and many other issues which are required to carry out a descriptive study of this type. Finally, not only students' availability but also teachers' collaboration supported and took part in this research, following the adequate ethical rules and respecting every single view that could provide valuable information so that there would be a good necessary correlation in the study.

Delimitations

Conceptual: The following terms have to be considered because of their relevance in their meaning and due to the high frequency they appear hereby.

Student Teacher: According to Freeman quoted by Richards & Nunan (1990), a student teacher is "any person engaged in learning to teach, whether through a formal

educational setting, such as a course of practicum; on-the-job orientation, training; or an in-service program".

Learning Strategies: According to Oxford (1990), learning strategies are "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations". Whereas Wenden & Rubin quoted by Hismanoglu (2000) define learning strategies as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information."

Communicative Competence: First, according to Hymes (1972) cited by Richards & Rodgers (2001), communicative competence refers to "what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community". In Hymes' view, a person who acquires communicative competence acquires both knowledge and ability for using feasible and appropriate language in relation to the situational context. On the other hand, a more recent analysis of communicative competence is found in Canale and Swain (1980), in which four dimensions of communicative competence are identified: grammatical competence or accuracy, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence (Richard & Rodgers, 2001). Finally as Oxford (1990) states, communicative competence is "competence or ability to communicate. It concerns both spoken or written language and all four language skills."

<div align="center">Population</div>

People who took part in this research consisted of 50 student teachers from different semesters of the English and French program at the University of Nariño. They are male and female young adults with a middle socio-economical status who are currently studying English as a foreign language under the same conditions.

Geographical Location

This research study was carried out at the University of Nariño which is placed in the city of San Juan de Pasto, the capital of the department of Nariño in the southwest of Colombia. The university facilities are in very good conditions and equipped with enough teaching resources and learning materials such as: television sets, VCRs, a language resource center and laboratories which are available for both teachers and students of the University.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The principal aim of this research is to describe the language learning strategies EFL students use to improve their communicative competence.

Specific Objectives

To describe the direct language learning strategies (Memory, Cognitive, and Compensation strategies) carried out by the English and French program students to improve their English communicative competence.

To describe the indirect language learning strategies (Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies) the English and French program students use to improve their English communicative competence.

To identify which language learning strategies have a remarkable influence on the English and French program students' English learning.

To describe the language learning strategy use featured by the English and French program students with regard to their gender.

Significance of the Study

Firstly, this descriptive study, which focuses on the field of EFL teacher education and language learning strategies, was geared to the English teaching community at the University of Nariño since its main purpose was to raise awareness of how crucial it is to examine the way language-teaching is learned in order to discern how English can be better taught. Only research on teacher training will provide knowledge to help student teachers become better language learners, and hence better future teachers of English as a foreign language.

Furthermore, authors like Oxford (2001) points out that the more teachers know about their students' learning strategy preferences, the more effectively they can steer instruction to the specific needs of students. For this reason, describing the learning strategies the English and French program students seem to perform leads university professors to learn about their students' interests, attitudes and learning styles as well as the extent to which student teachers attempt to enhance their English competence.

Finally, this exercise is meant to highlight the prominent role learning strategies play in the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language and it entirely supports how reasonable would be to consider the groundbreaking idea of conducting an explicit learning strategy instruction in the university language classrooms.

Limitations

Since this research is intended to describe the learning strategies used by the English and French program students from different semesters at the University of Nariño, interviewed people might feel underrated and they might not participate with such expected sincerity. Besides, as Freeman (2001) quotes: the field of teacher education is relatively an underexplored one in both second and foreign language teaching. The

literature on teacher education in language teaching is scarce compared to literature on issues such as methods and techniques for classroom teaching (Richards & Nunan, 1990).

On the other hand, this research might not fulfill the expectations of people who want to make this possible and the attention to this problem might not be seriously taken into account either by teachers or students of the University.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the past years there has been a shifting premise regarding the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language which focuses on learners rather than on teachers and the strategies students use to learn a language and improve their communicative competence.

This chapter aims at standing out the relationship between learning strategies and successful foreign language learning and it also provides an insight of how learning strategies are classified according to an expert's viewpoint. For doing this, it is necessary to give a definition of the concepts of communicative competence and language learning strategy proposed by some researchers who support how effective learning strategies are to achieve language proficiency.

Language Learning Strategy and Communicative Competence

The term language learning strategy has been fairly defined by many researches. According to Oxford (1990), learning strategies are "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations". Oxford (1990) also points out that foreign or second language strategies are "behaviors, steps or techniques students use, often consciously, to improve their progress in apprehending, internalizing and using the L2". On the other hand, Wenden & Rubin (1987), quoted by Hismanoglu (2000), define learning strategies as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information". Whereas O'Malley and Chamot (1990) briefly define them as "the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information".

As far as communicative competence is concerned, Hymes (1972) cited by Richards & Rodgers (2001), defines this term as "what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community". In Hymes' view, a person who acquires communicative competence acquires both knowledge and ability for using feasible and appropriate language in relation to the situational context. On the other hand, Canale and Swain (1980), based on Hymes (1972) works, break down communicative competence into four dimensions: (1) grammatical competence or accuracy, it refers to what Chomsky calls linguistic competence and involves the mastering of the linguistic code including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling and word formation; (2) sociolinguistic competence, it refers to the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different social contexts; (3) discourse competence, it deals with the interpretation of individual message elements and it is also related to the ability for combining ideas to achieve cohesion in form and coherence in thought; and (4) strategic competence, it refers to the coping strategies used to start, finish, maintain or repair communication so as to overcome limitations in language knowledge (Richard & Rodgers, 2001). Finally as Oxford (1990) states, communicative competence is "competence or ability to communicate. It concerns both spoken or written language and all four language skills."

Drawing on the clear definitions stated above and regarding the relationship between learning strategies and the successful learning of English as a foreign language, it can be said that language learning strategies are an important factor on students' learning process, along with the highly positive results they could bring about in English-language competence. According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed

involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. She also states that the development of communicative competence requires realistic interaction among learners using meaningful contextualized language; learning strategies help learners participate actively in such authentic communication; and such strategies operate in both general and specific ways to encourage the development of communicative competence. Lastly, Oxford quotes in Carter and Nunan (2001): "research shows that greater strategy use is often related to higher levels of language proficiency (O'Malley and Chamot 1990; Oxford and Ehrman 1995; Oxford 1996; Cohen 1997)".

<div align="center">Learning Strategies: Features of a Good Language Learner</div>

Learning strategies research sprung up from a concern for identifying the special or at least different characteristics between effective and ineffective learners. With a view to finding out what effective students do, research was focused on the "good language learner" and proved that successful students actually apply certain strategies when learning a new language (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990).

According to Wesche (1979) quoted by Dickinson (1987), successful learners are those who use their exposure time in the L2 actively, and who seek to extend this out of the classroom; who actively rehearse new material; who exploit its rich associational possibilities both through conscious association-making and meaningful practice in the L2, and who seek knowledge about the target language. In order to support this idea and give a clear example of how students fall back on certain strategies, authors like Rubin (1975) cited by Oxford (1994), suggests that good L2 learners are willing and accurate guessers, have a strong drive to communicate, are willing to make mistakes, focus on form by looking for patterns and analyzing, take advantage of all practice opportunities, monitor their speech as well as that of others; and pay attention to meaning.

On the whole, successful language learning, learning strategies and language proficiency have been considered as remarkable features of good language learners and proponents argue that at least one difference between good language learners and the rest is that good learners have developed effective language strategies (Dickinson, 1987).

System of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies have been systematically classified in different categories by many authors, (Wenden and Rubin 1987, O'Malley and Chamot 1990). However, the strategy system that Oxford (1990) presents is more comprehensive and detailed (See Figure 2.1). For this reason, her classification was taken into account as the theoretical bedrock for carrying out this study.
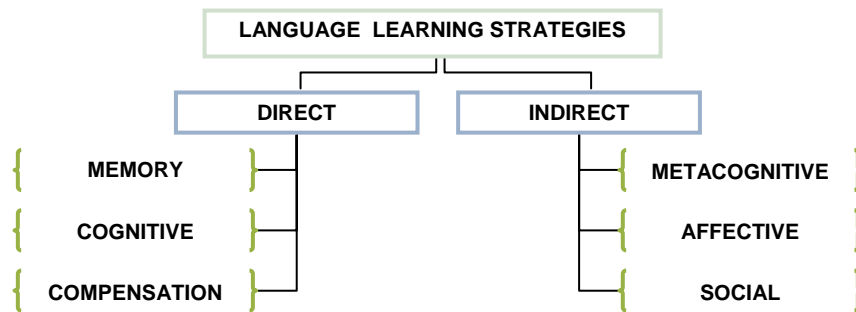
Figure 2.1 Diagram of Language Learning Strategy System

As it can be seen, Oxford classifies learning strategies into two main classes: direct and indirect. In general terms, direct strategies are those which relate directly to language learning and are composed of memory strategies for remembering and retrieving new information, cognitive strategies for understanding and producing the language, and compensation strategies for using the language despite knowledge gaps. On the other hand, indirect strategies are those that support and manage the language learning without directly involving the target language and are broken down into metacognitive

strategies for coordinating the learning process, affective strategies for regulating

emotions, and social strategies for learning with others (Oxford, 1990).

Oxford also points out that all language learning strategies are oriented toward the

broad goal of communicative competence and the way they stimulate its growth. As the

learner's competence grows, strategies can act in specific ways to improve particular

aspects of that communicative competence and its four dimensions. For example,

memory strategies, like using imagery; and cognitive strategies, like reasoning

deductively, strengthen grammatical accuracy. Social strategies, such as asking questions

or cooperating with peers; and strategies related to communication foster the development

of sociolinguistic competence. Compensation strategies, such as guessing when the

meaning is unknown or using synonyms or gestures to express meaning are the core of

strategic competence. Finally, cognitive, compensation and social strategies encourage

authentic communication and thus enhance discourse competence (Oxford, 1990).

In conclusion, it is clear how EFL students' competence is affected by the use of

individual learning strategies which foster them to become independent and self-directed

towards learning, a characteristic good learners have in common. As stated by Oxford

(2001), all language learning strategies are related to the features of control, goal-

directness autonomy and self-efficacy; learning strategies help students become more

autonomous and autonomy requires conscious control of one's own learning process.

An Insight into Direct Language Learning Strategies

In this research the classification of language learning strategies has been

considered according to Oxford's viewpoint. On the one hand, she emphasizes direct

language learning strategies which directly involve the subject matter. This first group is

subdivided into three different categories: Memory, Cognitive, and Compensation strategies for dealing with the language learning.

Memory Strategies. Oxford (1990) states that memory strategies help language learners to cope with the problem of remembering the large amounts of vocabulary necessary to achieve fluency. They also enable learners to store verbal material and then retrieve it when needed for communication. Memory strategies reflect very simple principles which involve meaning such as arranging things in order, making associations and reviewing. For the purpose of learning a new language, the arranging and associations must be personally meaningful to the learner, and the material to be reviewed must have significance. Figure 2.2 shows how memory strategies are broken down into four sets: (1) Creating Mental Linkages, (2) Applying Images and Sounds, (3) Reviewing Well, and (4) Employing Actions.

MEMORY STRATEGIES

CREATING MENTAL LINKAGES
1. Grouping
2. Associating / Elaborating
3. Placing new words into a context

APPLYING IMAGES AND SOUNDS
1. Using imagery
2. Semantic mapping
3. Using keywords
4. Representing sounds in memory

REVIEWING WELL
1. Structured reviewing

EMPLOYING ACTION
1. Using physical response or sensation
2. Using mechanical techniques
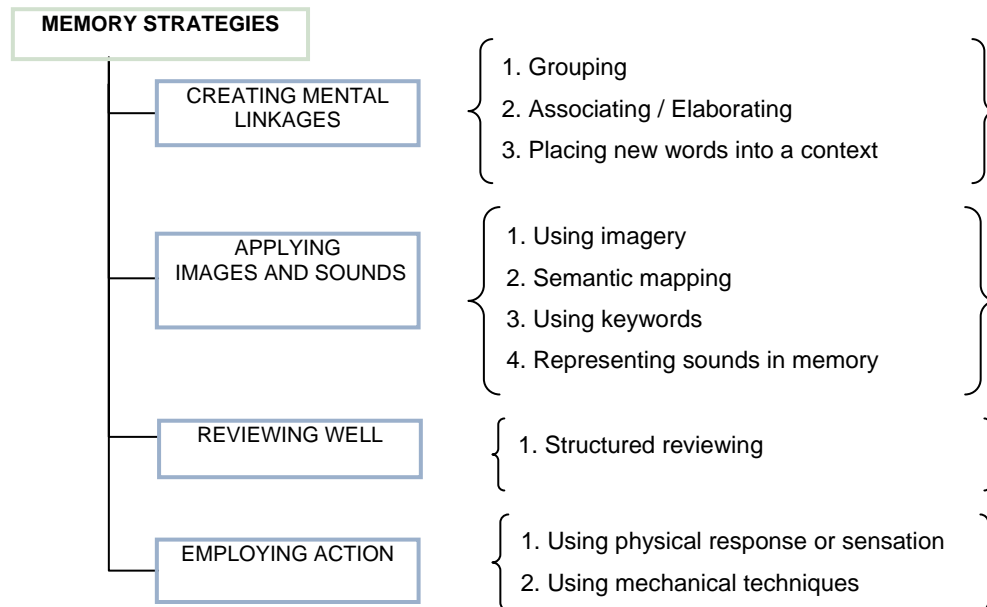
Figure 2.2 Diagram of Memory Strategies Breakdown

Cognitive Strategies. According to Oxford (1990), cognitive strategies refer to mental processes which are essential in learning and understanding a new language. These strategies vary a lot, ranging from repeating to analyzing expressions to summarizing. With all their variety, however, cognitive strategies are unified by a common function: manipulation or transformation of the target language by the learner.

On the other hand, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) assert that cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks and they involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. Whereas, Rubin (1987), quoted by Hismanoglu (2000), defines cognitive strategies as steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation or synthesis of learning materials.

Oxford (1990) outlines four sets of cognitive strategies as follows: (1) Practicing, (2) Receiving and Sending Messages, (3) Analyzing and Reasoning, and (4) Creating Structure for Input and Output, as shown in Figure 2.3. These strategies enable learners to understand and produce new language in many different ways. Practicing strategies, for instance, are useful to reach acceptable proficiency, a goal which requires hundreds of hours of practice, depending on the difficulty of the language and other factors. Whereas, creating structure for input or output are helpful for the students in preparing to use the language for speaking and writing. Lastly, analyzing and reasoning strategies are commonly used by learners, especially adults, who tend to construct a formal model in their minds based on analysis and comparison, create general rules and revise them when coping with new information in the new language.

COGNITIVE STRATEGIES

PRACTICING

1. Repeating
2. Formally practicing with sounds system
3. Recognizing and using formulas/patterns
4. Recombining
5. Practicing naturalistically

RECEIVING AND SENDING MESSAGES

1. Getting the idea quickly
2. Using resources for receiving and sending messages.

ANALYZING AND REASONING

1. Reasoning deductively
2. Analyzing expressions
3. Analyzing contrastively (2 languages)
4. Translating
5. Transferring

CREATING STRUCTURE FOR INPUT AND OUTPUT

1. Taking notes
2. Summarizing
3. Highlighting

Figure 2.3 Diagram of Cognitive Strategies Breakdown

Compensation Strategies. According to Oxford (1990), compensation strategies enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge. These strategies are intended to make up for an inadequate repertoire of grammar, and especially, of vocabulary. Compensation occurs not just in understanding the new language but also in producing it and these strategies allow learners to produce spoken and written expression in the new language, help them to obtain more practice and become more fluent. In addition to this, learners gain new information about what is appropriate or permissible in the target language. Figure 2.4 shows two sets concerning this kind of strategies: (1) Guessing intelligently in Listening and Reading which involves using language-based clues and seeking and using clues

which are not language-based, (2) Overcoming Limitations in Speaking and Writing,

which includes switching to the mother tongue, getting help, using mime or gesture,

selecting a topic, adjusting the message and using a circumlocution or synonym.

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COMPENSATION STRATEGIES

        GUESSING INTELLIGENTLY        1. Using linguistic clues
                                      2. Using other clues


                                      1. Switching to the mother tongue
                                      2. Getting help
                                      3. Using mime or gesture
             OVERCOMING               4. Avoiding communication partially / totally
           LIMITATIONS IN             5. Selecting the topic
        SPEAKING AND WRITING          6. Adjusting or approximating the message
                                      7. Coining words
                                      8. Using a circumlocution or synonym
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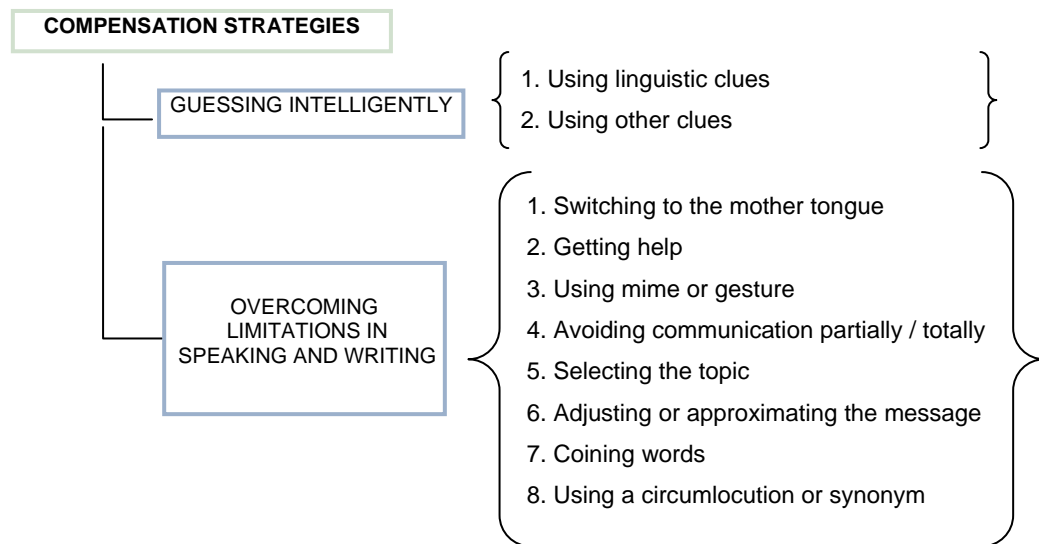
Figure 2.4 Diagram of Compensation Strategies Breakdown

An Insight into Indirect Language Learning Strategies

On the other hand, Oxford (1990) distinguishes between direct and indirect

language learning strategies which do not directly involve the subject matter itself, but are

also essential to language learning. This second group is subdivided into three different

categories: Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies for dealing with the language

learning.

Metacognitive Strategies. According to Oxford (1990), metacognitive means

beyond, beside or with the cognitive; therefore, metacognitive strategies are actions

which go beyond purely cognitive devices, and which provide a way for learners to

coordinate their own learning process. Furthermore, these strategies help individuals

know themselves better as language learners, manage their learning process in general and deal effectively with a given language task (Oxford, 2001). On the other hand, authors like O'Malley and Chamot (1990) assert that metacognitive strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of comprehension or production during learning and self-evaluation after the learning activity has been completed.

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES

CENTERING YOUR LEARNING
1. Overviewing and linking with know material
2. Paying attention
3. Delaying speech production to focus on listening

ARRANGING AND PLANNING YOUR LEARNING
1. Finding out about language learning
2. Organizing
3. Setting goals and objectives
4. Identifying the purpose of language task (For listening/reading/speaking/writing)
5. Planning for a language task
6. Seeking practice opportunities

EVALUATING YOUR LEARNING
1. Self-monitoring
2. Self-evaluating

Figure 2.5 Diagram of Metacognitive Strategies Breakdown

Focusing on Oxford's system, metacognitive strategies include three sets: (1) Centering Your Learning, (2) Arranging and Planning Your Learning, and (3) Evaluating Your Learning (See Figure 2.5). Oxford also states that these strategies are essential for successful language learning and make language learners more capable. Metacognitive strategies like organizing, setting goals and objectives, considering the purpose, and

planning for a language task, help learners arrange and plan their language learning in an efficient, effective way. Whereas, the metacognitive strategy of seeking practice opportunities is especially important since learners who are seriously interested in learning a new language must take responsibility to seek as many practice opportunities as possible, usually outside of the classroom.

Affective Strategies. The term affective refers to emotions, attitudes, motivations and values (Oxford, 1990). The affective side of the learner is probably one of the biggest influences on language learning success or failure. Good language learners are often those who know how to control their emotions and attitudes about learning and positive emotions and attitudes can make language learning far more effective and enjoyable. In contrast, negative feelings can stunt progress, even for the rare learner who fully understands all the technical aspects of how to learn a new language. Self-esteem is one of the primary affective elements and its sense of efficacy is reflected in attitudes (mental dispositions, beliefs or opinions) which influence the learner's motivation to keep on trying to learn. Just as attitudes affect motivation, attitudes and motivation work together to influence language learning performance itself, including both global language proficiency and proficiency in specific language skills such as listening comprehension, reading comprehension and oral production. In addition, research shows that the combined attitude/motivation factor strongly influences whether the learner loses or maintains language skills after language training is over (Oxford, 1990).

Affective strategies are broken down into three important sets: (1) Lowering Your Anxiety, (2) Encouraging Yourself, and (3) Taking Your Emotional Temperature, as it can be seen in Figure 2.6. These strategies are powerful ways to improve attitudes, and thus, motivation, they also make learners feel more confident when learning a new

language and are particularly helpful for discerning negative attitudes and emotions that

impede language learning process.
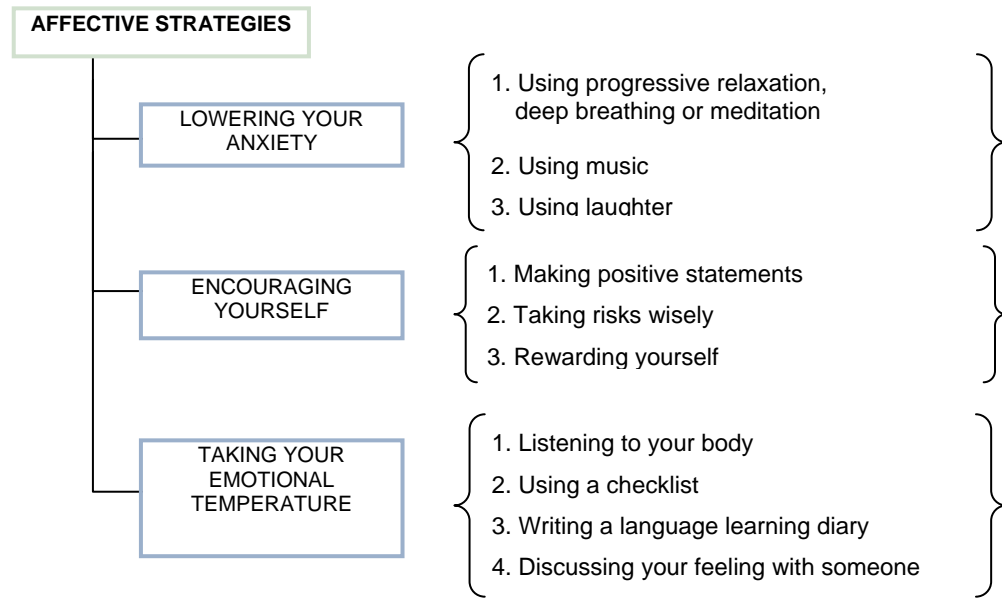
Figure 2.6 Diagram of Affective Strategies Breakdown

Social Strategies. As Oxford (1990) states, language is a form of social behavior;

it is communication, and communication occurs between and among people. Learning a

language thus involves other people, and appropriate social strategies are very important

in this process. As shown in figure 2.7, Oxford outlines three sets of social strategies: (1)

Asking Questions, (2) Cooperating with Others, and (3) Empathizing with Others. Asking

questions, for instance, is a basic social interaction that helps learners get closer to the

intended meaning and thus aids to their understanding. It also helps learners encourage

their conversation partners to provide larger quantities of input in the target language.

Cooperation with peers and with more proficient users of the target language leads to the

following advantages: better student and teacher satisfaction, stronger language learning

motivation, more language practice opportunities, more feedback about language errors and greater use of different language functions. As far as empathizing strategies is concerned, they are essential to successful communication in any language and social strategies can help all learners increase their ability to empathize by developing cultural understanding and becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings.
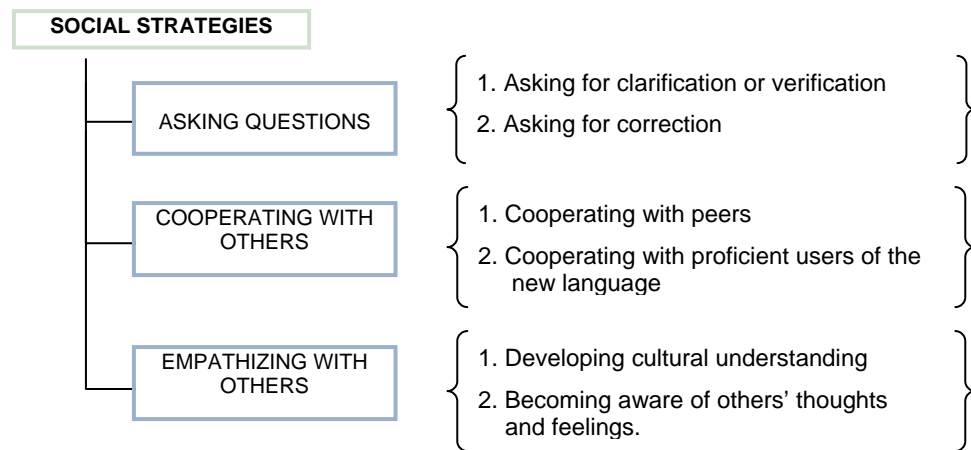
Figure 2.7 Diagram of Social Strategies Breakdown

Factors Influencing the Choice of Learning Strategies

There is no doubt that many external and internal learner factors such as motivation, age, learner's aptitudes and attitudes, cognitive style, personality and so forth, have a remarkable influence on successful language learning. Likewise, existing research has demonstrated that some of these factors and others also affect the choice of language learning strategies. Oxford (1990) briefly states that certain factors such as: motivation and purpose for learning, age, gender, general learning style, and task requirements are key elements to using different learning strategies (See Figure 2.8).
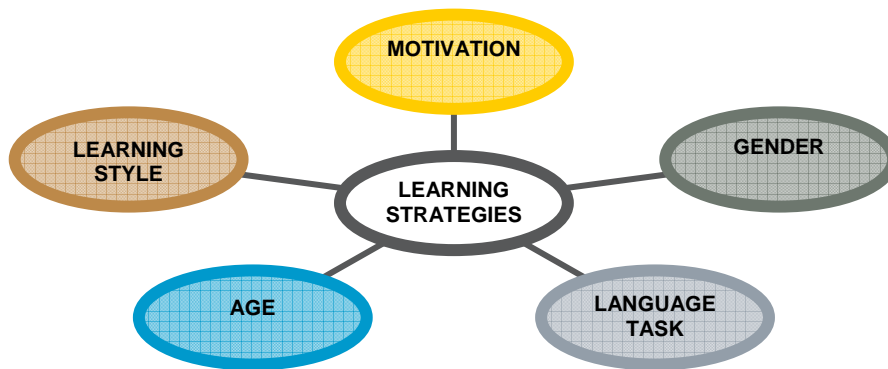
Figure 2.8 Factors Influencing the Choice of Learning Strategies

Motivation and Purpose for Learning. According to Oxford (1990), more highly motivated students tend to use a wider range of strategies than less motivated students and the particular reason for studying the language was important in the strategy choice. For example, students learning a new language for a communicative purpose use different strategies than those learners related to a career field whose aim is to fulfill a graduation requirement. Authors like O'Malley and Chamot (1990) assert that student's motivation is considered the primary influence for language learning and have found research evidence supporting that effective students not only tended to be highly motivated, but they also showed variations in motivational level during language learning.

Age and Gender. As far as age and gender is concerned, recent studies indicate that there is a different strategy choice between older and younger learners, whereas females reported a greater and more frequently use of strategies than males when learning a new language.

Learning Style. On the other hand, general learning style, such as analytic-global orientation or field dependence-independence mode, has a strong effect on the choice of

learning strategies. For instance, analytic-style learners preferred using cognitive strategies such as contrastive analysis and reasoning, while global-style learners were more likely to use compensation strategies such as guessing, paraphrasing and gesturing (Oxford, 1994).

Task Requirements. Finally, Oxford (1990) points out that task requirements help determine the strategies that language learners use so as to carry out a specific task. Students, for example, would not use the same strategies for writing a composition as for having an informal conversation. Furthermore, O' Malley and Chamot (1990) have identified that a critical factor on strategy use is the task itself which heavily influenced the strategies selected at all levels of language learning.

In conclusion, language learning strategy research does not only confirms how important the learning strategies are as a mechanism of self-study, but also, it supports that language learning strategies are affected by certain factors which play an influential role in strategy choice making a great difference among language learners.

CHAPTER 3.METHODOLOGY

Throughout this paper, a problematic situation concerning the learning of English as a Foreign Language has been presented along with the theoretical background that relates to it.

This chapter provides information about the methodology to be used when working on a descriptive research. It entails, therefore, the design; the participants, setting and sample; as well as the instruments to be applied so as to collect the required information. Moreover, the procedure, the data analysis and finally, the ethical issues will be explained in this section.

Design

The design of this study has been laid out with the overall features which are required in order to carry out a descriptive quantitative research. This exercise, hence, is intended to describe systematically the parts, types and categories regarding certain phenomenon taking place in a particular situation.

In this case, the main purpose of the descriptive study is to identify which language learning strategies the students of the English and French program of the University of Nariño use to improve their communicative competence in English.

Therefore, so as to obtain a detailed description of the strategies used by the English and French program students, the data was entirely gathered by means of a structured survey. In this way, such different types and categories of language learning strategies carried out by student teachers and how often they fall back on these strategies as a mechanism of self-study was thoroughly described through this data-collection instrument which provided relevant, sufficient and objective information for doing this research.

Participants, Setting and Sample

Participants. Fifty student teachers enrolled in different semesters of the English and French program at the University of Nariño during the year 2005 served as participants in this study. They were male and female young adults whose ages ranged from 18-to- 27 years old and belonged to a middle socio-economical status. All participants have been involved in the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language for the last two or four years; in accordance to their course (fourth, sixth or eighth semester); they are currently studying English-language under the same conditions and are either at intermediate or advanced level of English proficiency.

Setting. This research study was carried out at the English and French program of the University of Nariño whose facilities are placed in the northeast of San Juan de Pasto. In this setting English is spoken as a foreign language by both university professors and student teachers who are involved in the field of English teacher education.

Sample. The sample of this study was quite representative since it entailed 50 student teachers enrolled in three different semesters (fourth, sixth and eighth) at the English and French program of the University of Nariño.

On the one hand, a number of 40 participants were randomly chosen in both fourth and sixth semesters, whereas 10 student teachers from eighth semester were likewise included in the sample. Consequently, the enrollees who were asked to take part in this study nearly represented the third part of the whole student teacher community during the first six-month class-period in the year 2005.

Data Collection Instruments

As Oxford (1990) states, many language learning strategies take place mentally and cannot be observed. For example, memory strategies like creating mental linkages and using imagery; or compensation strategies like guessing intelligently are "invisible" in terms of standard observation schemes. Therefore, classroom observations were not considered in this study as a data-collection technique.

By contrast, a structured questionnaire called the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL; Oxford 1990) has been systematically designed based on Oxford's learning strategy classification, the threshold for doing this research.

The SILL Version 7.0 is geared to students of English as a second or foreign language; it contains 50 multiple-choice questions which can be objectively scored and analyzed, and it indicates which strategies the learner tends to use more frequently (Oxford, 1990).

For these reasons and due to the suitability and validity of the SILL questionnaire for achieving the objectives of this descriptive research, the SILL version 7.0 (Oxford, 1990) was applied as the only instrument for collecting objective data, along with a background questionnaire which provided added information of the respondents (See Appendix).

Procedure

First of all, in order to perform this descriptive research on language learning strategies, professors of the university were told beforehand about the data-collection process so they would allow their students to take part in it. Once in the classroom of the determined semester (sixth, fourth or eighth), the student teachers who were asked to participate were randomly assigned. Then, they were provided with a general overview

about the study, the background questionnaire and the answers sheet just before handing

out the SILL worksheet. Right after answering the background questionnaire, it was time

for the respondents to hold the SILL. Since the language of the SILL version 7.0 is very

simplified, all the instructions were conducted in English and student teachers were

allowed to complete it in 30 minutes, approximately.

Finally, once the data was collected, the assessment steps for the SILL suggested

by Oxford (1990) took place along with the proper analysis of the information.

Pilot Study

Although the data collection instrument (SILL) used in this research was reliable

enough to obtain the required information, it was advisable that other student teachers,

different from the participants, took the SILL questionnaire in order to find out their

reactions and the average time they would take when coping with it. The pilot study,

therefore, entailed five English and French program students enrolled in the second or

tenth semester at the University of Nariño. The procedure, instructions and survey

application was held just right in the same way it has been explained hereby.

Data Analysis

This descriptive research on language learning strategies was carried out through a

survey as the instrument for collecting data. The survey consisted of a background

questionnaire and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL; Oxford 1990).

On the one hand, the background questionnaire was compound of 9 closed-ending

items and gave additional information about the respondents. On the other hand, the SILL

questionnaire, which provided the researchable information, was compound of 6 parts

according to the learning strategy category. The SILL contains 50 closed-ending items

and the answers scale for each question is broken down into 5 choices ranging from never or almost never to always or almost always.

The data analysis was firstly organized and the preliminary ideas were broadly stood out. Then, the overall information has been classified into related categories and patterns, in this way specific information were drawn. Finally, the interpretation of the survey and report of the results took place.

<div align="center">Ethical Issues</div>

Certain important ethical issues were considered so as to perform this research study. Firstly, every single source of quotations used as a theoretical support has been cited with its respective author and year of publication. Secondly, the authorization for applying the survey was asked beforehand to the professors of the university. Thirdly, the surveyed student teachers were told that their volunteer participation is wholly harmless but relevant, and that their responses would not bring about any consequence in their studies record. Finally, the results of the survey were given back to those participants who were interested in knowing which learning strategies they use in their own learning process.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the paper is built upon the analysis of the results which were obtained throughout the procedure preciously explained in Chapter 3, it entails, therefore, the method used to report the research findings by providing a precise description of both general and detailed information about the language learning strategies student teachers use in an EFL setting.

For doing this, the research results were firstly laid out to indicate how often learning strategies occur among the surveyed student teachers as well as which specific strategies are more frequently used on each category. Secondly, an overview of research findings as a whole is provided so as to identify which language learning strategies have a remarkable influence on the university enrollees. Finally, the strategy use with regard to gender factor is briefly described at the end of this chapter.

Method

Drawing on Oxford's (1990) strategy categorization as the threshold for doing this foreign language descriptive research, the main objective of it was to identify which direct and indirect learning strategies EFL student teachers tend to use more frequently so as to improve their English-language competence. With a view to getting this, the sample entailed fifty student teachers, both male and female, enrolled in different semesters at the University of Nariño. For the sample technique, a number of 40 participants were randomly chosen in both fourth and sixth semesters plus 10 student teachers enrolled in eighth semester. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, all participants have been involved in the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language over the last two or four years and are either at intermediate or advanced level of English proficiency.

The instrument used to collect data on strategy use reported by student teachers was the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning Version 7.0 (SILL; Oxford 1990). This structured questionnaire, which is geared to students of English as a second or foreign language, incorporates six parts according to the learning strategy category and indicates which strategies each learner tends to use more frequently. Furthermore, a background questionnaire was also applied in order to provide added information about the participants.

Once the data was gathered, the numerical results of each part of the SILL were put down into words so as to get a clear description about the frequency learning strategies occur among the student teachers. Therefore, according to their scores, the frequency-scale conveying how often the respondents use a certain group of strategies was ranked as follows: never or almost never used, generally not used, sometimes used, usually used and always or almost always used. Afterwards, these frequency values were interpreted in low, medium or high averages, as shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Key to Understanding Averages

Score	Frequency value	Average
1.0 to 1.4	Never or almost never used	LOW
1.5 to 2.4	Generally not used	
2.5 to 3.4	Sometimes used	MEDIUM
3.5 to 4.4	Usually used	
4.5 to 5.0	Always or almost always used	HIGH

To begin with, the results were statistically analyzed by using a data processing program called STATGRAPHICS version 5.0, and the information was properly reported by categories and patterns. The corresponding results appear on frequency tables which show the number of times each value of a group of strategies occurred, likewise,

percentages based on overall averages are supported by barcharts for a better

understanding of research findings.

   On the other hand, a second deeper analysis was conducted in order to highlight

the most remarkable strategies carried out by learners on each learning strategy category

providing a detailed description of the research findings. Consequently, the scores of

every single question item on the SILL were first summed up and the result was then

divided into the total number of the respondents so as to get the average for each strategy

item. In this particular case, 50 student teachers' answers were involved in order to find

out which specific learning strategies they tend to use more frequently. As it can further

be seen, findings were reported in tables in which SILL statements were sorted

downwards in a ranking-list according to the frequency value in which they occurred

among learners.

   Furthermore, there is also an overview of research findings providing discernible

information of the general results obtained from the first analysis. In this particular case,

the overall averages of the six categories concerning direct and indirect learning strategies

were compiled as a whole in a frequency table, supported by a barchart, displaying which

strategies apparently have a remarkable influence on the English and French program

students.

   In the end, with a view to obtaining a broad description in the strategy use with

regard to the gender factor, it was necessary to reduce the sample in equal parts since

female student teachers outnumbered male learners. For that reason, the high averages

scored by 22 male and 22 female university enrollees were summed up and divided into

the total number of participants for each group in order to identify the differences in

learning strategy use.

Finally, results were reported in a frequency table showing how highly-frequently the surveyed student teachers tend to use direct and indirect learning strategies based on their gender and each strategy category.

Results

Direct Language Learning Strategies

In this descriptive study of learning strategies in foreign language learning, the analysis was firstly focused on how often EFL student teachers carry out direct learning strategies so as to improve their communicative competence. Afterwards, the report focuses on which specific strategies are more frequently used on each category involving memory, cognitive and compensation strategies.

Memory Strategies

As far as memory strategies are concerned, a large number of students enrolled in the English and French program at the University of Nariño reported a fair average use of these strategies. Table 4.1 displays how often memory strategies occur among student teachers and it might answer the question "How often do EFL learners fall back on memory strategies so as to improve their communicative competence?"

As it can be seen in Table 4.1, only 2% of the respondents never or almost never use memory strategies and 10% do not generally use them. This perfectly means that 12% of the surveyed students rather show a very low tendency to carry out this kind of strategies. By contrast, memory strategies are sometimes used by 62% of the respondents, which represents that most of the student teachers do not seem to fall back on them very often. Finally, 24% of the participants tend to usually use memory strategies whereas 2% reported always or almost always using them. As a result, the sum total of 26% of student teachers apparently scored a high average on memory strategy use which indicates that

nearly the third part of the English and French program students have a certain knack to remembering more effectively.

Table 4.1 Frequency Table for Memory Strategy Use

Average	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
LOW	Never/almost never used	1	2%	1	2 %
	Generally not used	5	10%	6	12%
MEDIUM	Sometimes used	31	62%	37	74%
HIGH	Usually used	12	24%	49	98%
	Always/almost always used	1	2%	50	100%

Barchart for Memory Strategy Use
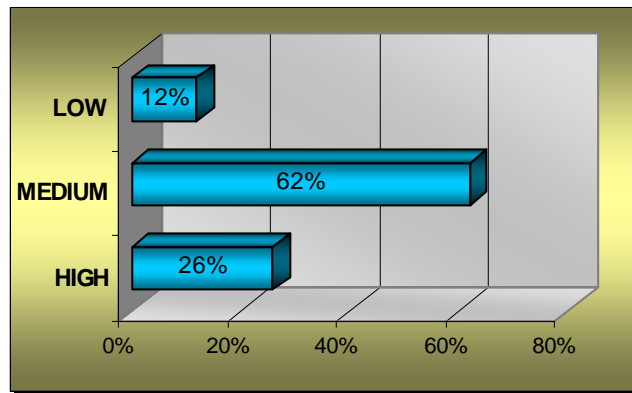
In order to provide a detailed description about memory strategy use reported by the surveyed student teachers, those specific strategies which help learners remember more effectively were listed downwards and sorted into groups according to the frequency value in which they occurred, as shown in Table 4.2.

Firstly, results revealed that when it comes to learning and storing new words, student teachers have a particular preference in creating mental linkages. In other words, they usually tend to make up associations between what they already know and new items, or place new words in a context so that they can easily remember them.

On the other hand, memory strategies involving structured reviewing, imagery use and mental representation of sounds are proven to be sometimes supportive techniques among learners. However, some other mechanical strategies which require additional effort or attention such as making flashcards or using rhymes to remember new words do not seem to be very meaningful for them, and hence are not generally used.

Bearing in mind that participants have not been formally instructed on language learning strategies, the reported findings lead to the conclusion that a large number of EFL students who are enrolled at the university have a fair average in relation to memory strategy use.

Table 4.2 Memory Strategies carried out by Student Teachers.

| Statements concerning Memory Strategies (SILL – 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.	**USUALLY USED**
3 I review English lessons often. 4 I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used. 5 I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board or on a street sign. 6 I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or a picture of the word to help me remember the word. 7 I physically act out new English words.	**SOMETIMES USED**
8 I use flashcards to remember new English words. 9 I use rhymes to remember new English words.	**GENERALLY NOT USED**

Cognitive strategies

Regarding cognitive strategies, it should be pointed out that even though there was no tendency to always or almost always use this group of strategies, the English and French program students reported a slight increase in the usually-used frequency value. Table 4.3 displays the frequent use of these strategies among student teachers and it might answer the question "How often do EFL learners fall back on cognitive strategies so as to improve their communicative competence?"

Table 4.3 Frequency Table for Cognitive Strategy Use

Average	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
LOW	Never/almost never used	1	2%	1	2%
	Generally not used	4	8%	5	10%
MEDIUM	Sometimes used	26	52%	31	62%
HIGH	Usually used	19	38%	50	100%

Barchart for Cognitive Strategy Use
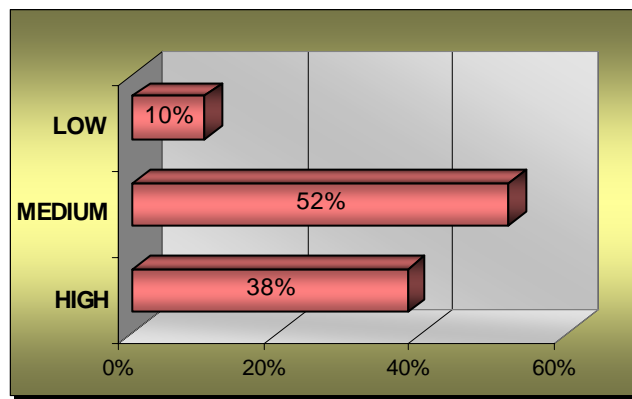
As it can be observed in Table 4.3, only 2 % of the surveyed student teachers never or almost never perform cognitive strategies, whereas 8% do not generally use them for learning English. Therefore, cognitive strategy use may be rated as low in only 10% of the EFL learners enrolled in the university. By contrast, most of the respondents scored

a medium average since cognitive strategies are proven to be sometimes used by 52% of the student teachers while 38% reported using these strategies usually, which indicates that a significant number of the English and French program students reached a high average on cognitive strategy use.

Table 4.4, on the other hand, shows exactly which cognitive strategies are most carried out by the surveyed student teachers so as to facilitate their English-language learning. These specific cognitive actions were ranked downwards according to the frequency value in which they occurred among learners.

Table 4.4 Cognitive Strategies carried out by Student Teachers.

Statements concerning Cognitive Strategies (SILL – Part B)	
1 I try not to translate word-for-word. 2 I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.	USUALLY USED
3 I use the English words I know in different ways. 4 I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to the movies spoken in English. 5 I practice the sounds of English. 6 I say or write new English words several times. 7 I read for pleasure in English. 8 I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English. 9 I first skim an English passage, then go back and read carefully. 10 I start conversations in English. 11 I try to talk like native English speakers. 12 I try to find patterns in English. 13 I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English. 14 I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.	SOMETIMES USED

As it can be seen in Table 4.4, such cognitive strategies like getting the idea quickly and taking notes are right on top of the list. It indicates that most of the surveyed student teachers attempt to catch the main idea of what they read or hear without necessarily focusing on every single word. Furthermore, they seemingly have the habit of writing down general ideas or specific points in English which is quite helpful for both understanding and producing the language.

Although the rest of cognitive strategies involving practicing, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output were reported to be sometimes used by the English and French program students, it does not mean that all of these strategies did occur likewise. Therefore, some features concerning cognitive strategy classification are worth standing out.

First of all, concerning strategies for practicing, which are among the most important cognitive strategies, findings revealed that surveyed student teachers slightly preferred putting into effect simpler learning actions such as repeating English sounds instead of imitating native speakers, practicing English naturalistically by reading a book instead of falling into a conversation, or combining known elements in new ways instead of recognizing and using patterns in English.

Another observation related to cognitive strategy use concerns logical analysis and reasoning from which it can be said that strategies such as analyzing new expressions by breaking it down into parts or analyzing contrastively by comparing English-language elements with elements of their own language are scarcely used by the English and French program students.

In conclusion and with no intention to overrate student teachers' performance in cognitive strategies, results demonstrate that the use of this group of strategies should be

rated as good enough since most of the surveyed learners reached a positive average when using their mental processes.

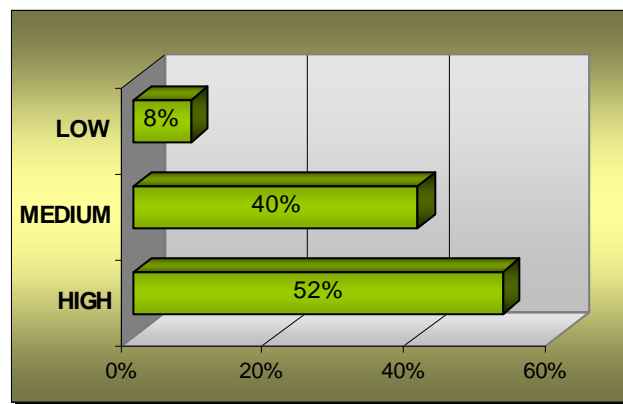<div style="text-align:center">*Compensation Strategies*</div>

Unlike memory and cognitive strategies, none of the English and French program students reported never or almost never using compensation strategies. Therefore, a remarkable increase in compensation strategy use became evident among the respondents. Table 4.5 shows the results and might answer the question "How often do EFL learners fall back on cognitive strategies so as to improve their communicative competence?"

Table 4.5 Frequency Table for Compensation Strategy Use

Average	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
LOW	Generally not used	4	8%	4	8%
MEDIUM	Sometimes used	20	40%	24	48%
HIGH	Usually used	25	50%	49	98%
	Always/almost always used	1	2%	50	100%

<div style="text-align:center">Barchart for Compensation Strategy Use</div>

As shown in Table 4.5, 8% of the surveyed student teachers do not tend to generally use these strategies in order to make up for missing knowledge, which indicates that few of them scored a low average in compensation strategy use. By contrast, these

strategies are proven to be sometimes used by 40% of the university enrollees which led

them to reach a medium average. Furthermore, resulted from 50% of the participants who

reported a greater tendency to usually fall back on compensation strategies plus 2% who

stated always or almost always use them, it can be truly said that 52% of the English and

French program students scored a high average in strategy use. This perfectly means that

compensation strategies are highly carried out by a considerable large number of the

surveyed student teachers.

On the other hand, Table 4.6 provides a detailed description about compensation

strategy use reported by the surveyed student teachers. Those specific strategies which

help learners overcome English knowledge gaps were listed downwards according to the

frequency value in which they occurred among the participants.

Table 4.6 Compensation Strategies carried out by Student Teachers.

Statements concerning Compensation Strategies (SILL – Part C)	
1 If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.	USUALLY USED
2 I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.	SOMETIMES USED
3 To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.	
4 When I cannot think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.	
5 I read English without looking up every new word.	
6 I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.	

As far as compensation strategies are concerned, it is clear how university

enrollees usually try to overcome limitations in knowledge of vocabulary by using a

circumlocution or a synonym, especially at speaking and writing. In other words, when

being unaware of any concept in English, surveyed student teachers are very likely to

describe its meaning or use a word that stands for the same thing. Other compensation

strategies involving guessing intelligently seem to have certain influence on the English

and French program students who apparently tend to make guesses regularly to catch and

understand the meaning of what is heard or read.

Finally, strategies such as using mime or gesture to indicate the meaning of a

concept, adjusting or approximating the message by overlooking unimportant

information, and making up new words to get across the desired idea seemed to be

likewise very supportive for student teachers when compensating for missing knowledge.

On the whole, research findings lead to the conclusion that the use of this kind of

strategies is by far proven to be satisfactory since most of the students enrolled in the

university fall back on compensation strategies highly frequently.

<div align="center">Indirect Language Learning Strategies</div>

Following through the report of results elicited from this descriptive study of

learning strategies, this part of the analysis is focused on how often EFL student teachers

carry out indirect learning strategies so as to improve their communicative competence.

Right after this, the report focuses on which specific strategies are more frequently used

on each category involving metacognitive, affective and social strategies.

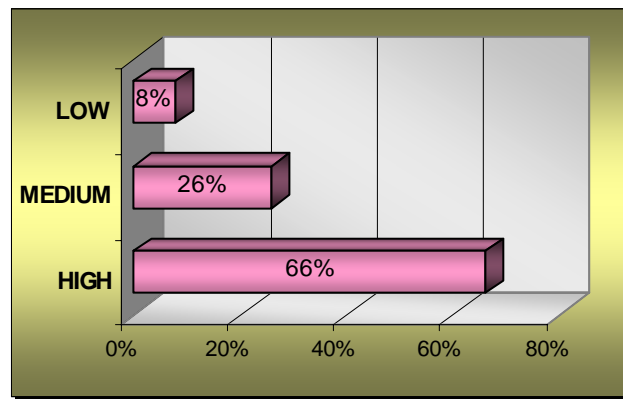<div align="center">*Metacognitive Strategies*</div>

With regard to metacognitive strategies, a great number of students enrolled in the

English and French program at the University of Nariño surprisingly reported a high

average use of these strategies. Table 4.7 shows how frequently student teachers rely on

metacognition for learning English and it might answer the question "How often do EFL

learners fall back on metacognitive strategies so as to improve their language

competence?"

Table 4.7 Frequency Table for Metacognitive Strategy Use

Average	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
LOW	Generally not used	4	8%	4	8%
MEDIUM	Sometimes used	13	26%	17	34%
HIGH	Usually used	30	60%	47	94%
	Always/almost always used	3	6%	50	100%

Barchart for Metacognitive Strategy Use

As it can be seen in Table 4.7, although none of the surveyed student teachers

reported never or almost never using metacognitive strategies, these strategies are not

generally used by 8% of the respondents who consequently scored a low average in

metacognitive strategy use. By contrast, these strategies are sometimes carried out by

26% of the English and French program students, which indicates that nearly half of the

whole surveyed enrollees reached a medium average when applying metacognition

processes. In addition to this, 60% of the participants proved to usually use metacognitive

strategies whereas 6 % reported always or almost always using them. As a result, a sum

total of 66% of student teachers certainly showed a very high tendency to perform this kind of strategies so as to improve their English communicative competence.

In order to highlight metacognitive strategy use reported by student teachers, Table 4.8 displays a list of specific actions which have to do with the organization and evaluation of one's own learning. The strategies were ranked downwards considering the frequency value in which they occurred among participants.

Table 4.8 Metacognitive Strategies carried out by Student Teachers.

Statements concerning Metacognitive Strategies (SILL – Part D)	
1 I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	USUALLY USED
2 I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	
3 I think about my progress in learning English.	
4 I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	
5 I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	
6 I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	
7 I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	SOMETIMES USED
8 I look for people I can talk to in English.	
9 I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	

According to the results shown in Table 4.8, it can be assumed that when it comes to coordinating the English learning process, student teachers preferred paying attention to either general or specific aspects of the language. In other words, surveyed learners apparently have the ability to focus their attention on what the find important in English overlooking expendable information.

On the other hand, such metacognitive strategies like self-monitoring and self-evaluating were also given a preferential use which indicates that most of the English and French program students tend to identify and learn from errors very often; likewise they are likely to evaluate their own progress in understanding and producing the language.

Furthermore, other metacognitive strategies related to arranging and planning language learning are also proven to occur quite regularly among student teachers. For example, strategies such as setting clear goals and objectives, finding out about how language learning works and seeking out for opportunities to practice English seem to be quite helpful for respondents who are seriously interested in improving their own English learning, and hence their language competence.

In conclusion, findings revealed that a great number of university students enrolled in the English and French program successfully reported a high performance in metacognitive strategy use. For this reason, it can be said that student teachers, who are actively involved in metacognition, are really conscious of how important becoming responsible of their own language learning is, and therefore they are keen on carrying out these strategies very frequently.

Affective Strategies

As far as affective strategies are concerned, a significant number of the English and French program students of the University of Nariño reported a medium average use of these strategies. However, results indicating a high average for strategy use slightly surpassed low average results. Table 4.9 clearly displays these findings regarding affective strategies and it might answer the question "How often do EFL learners fall back on affective strategies so as to improve their communicative competence?"

Table 4.9 Frequency Table for Affective Strategy Use

Average	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
LOW	Never/almost never used	1	2%	1	2%
	Generally not used	8	16%	9	18%
MEDIUM	Sometimes used	29	58%	38	76%
HIGH	Usually used	11	22%	49	98%
	Always/almost always used	1	2%	50	100%

Barchart for Affective Strategy Use
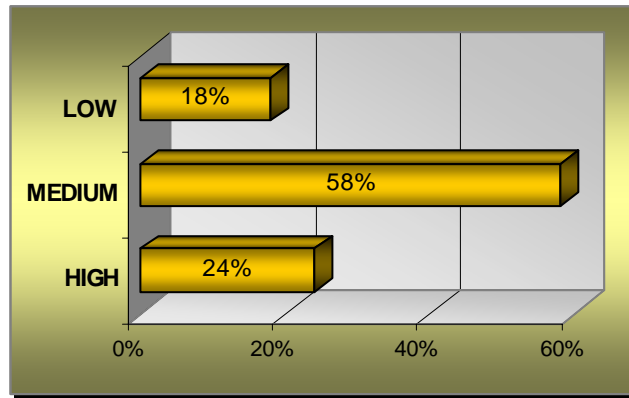
As it can be seen, only 2% of the respondents never or almost never use affective strategies whereas 16% do not generally use them for learning English. This means that affective strategy use is rated as low in 18% of the EFL learners enrolled in the university. By contrast, a significant number of the surveyed student teachers scored a medium average in using affective strategies which are proven to be sometimes used by 58% of the respondents. Lastly, 24% of the participants seemed to usually carry out affective strategies while only 2% reported always or almost always using them. As a result, 26% of the English and French program students reached a high average on affective strategy use.

On the other hand, Table 4.10 provides a detailed description about affective

strategy use reported by the surveyed student teachers. Those specific strategies which

help learners manage their emotions were ranked downwards according to the frequency

value in which they occurred among the respondents.

Table 4.10 Affective Strategies carried out by Student Teachers.

Statements concerning Affective Strategies (SILL – Part E)	
1 I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English. 2 I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake. 3 I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.	USUALLY USED
4 I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English. 5 I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.	SOMETIMES USED
6 I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.	GENERALLY NOT USED

Results revealed that some affective strategies which involve anxiety-reducing,

self-encouragement and emotional awareness, seem to be supportive techniques for

managing negative feelings and attitudes about English-language learning.

Firstly, student teachers usually try to get control over their emotions by bringing

anxiety down and relaxing every time they feel uptight about using English. Eventually,

they seem to push themselves to practice English without caring about making a mistake.

Finally, when coping with the language, university enrollees apparently have a certain

knack to noticing and assessing their own emotions reflecting either negative feelings like

stress, worry, fear and boring; or positive feelings such as interest, calmness and pleasure. In addition, student teachers preferred putting into effect strategies like rewarding themselves for a particularly good performance in a language task or discussing with a close person about the way they feel when learning English rather than writing about their emotions.

In general terms, research findings lead to the conclusion that although most of the English and French program students of the University of Nariño reported a medium average in using affective strategies, a disquieting number of student teachers do not seem to think of the importance of emotional aspects in the learning of English.

Social Strategies

Regarding social strategies, none of the English and French program students reported never or almost never using compensation strategies. Moreover, a slight increase in high average for strategy use is evidently clear among the respondents. Table 4.11 shows the frequent use of social strategies among student teachers and it might answer the question "How often do EFL learners fall back on social strategies so as to improve their communicative competence?"

As shown in Table 4.11, 18% of the surveyed student teachers do not tend to generally use these strategies through interaction with others, which indicates that they scored a low average in social strategy use. By contrast, these strategies are proven to be sometimes used by 42% of the university enrollees which led them to reach a medium average. Lastly, 32% of the participants reported a tendency to usually carry out social strategies and 8% stated always or almost always use them. Consequently, the percentage of student teachers scoring a high average in social strategy use resulted in the sum total of 40%. This perfectly means that social strategies are positively carried out by a

considerable number of the surveyed student teachers who apparently enjoy learning

English with others.

Table 4.11 Frequency Table for Social Strategy Use

Average	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
LOW	Generally not used	9	18%	9	18%
MEDIUM	Sometimes used	21	42%	30	60%
HIGH	Usually used	16	32%	46	92%
	Always/almost always used	4	8%	50	100%

Barchart for Social Strategy Use
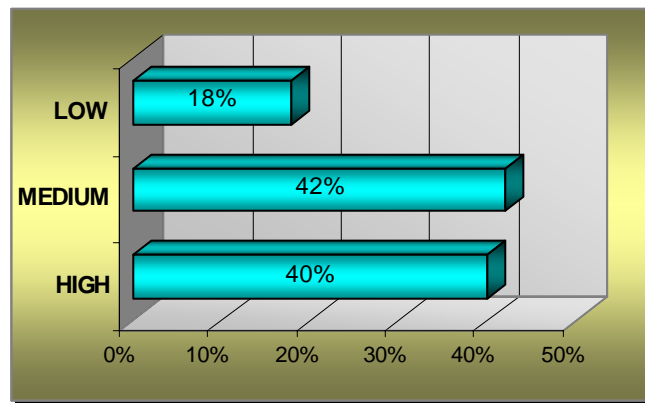
With a view to giving a more detailed description about social strategy use, Table

4.12 displays a ranking list of those specific strategies according to the frequency value in

which they occurred among participants.

As it can be observed in Table 4.12, such social strategies like asking questions for

clarification or verification are on top of the list. It means that most of the surveyed

student teachers are usually likely to ask English speakers to repeat, paraphrase, explain,

or slow down language utterances when they do not understand something or every time

they want to make sure something is correct. However, asking someone else for

correction when speaking is proven to be used only sometimes by respondents, perhaps

there is no need to ask for it since correction in English learning environment often occurs spontaneously.

On the other hand, when it comes to social strategies that involve cooperating with others outside of the classroom, the English and French program students slightly preferred interacting with proficient users of English to practicing with their partners. Even so, drawing on research findings, it can be stated that these social strategies including learning about the culture of English speakers, turned out to be meaningful for the university enrollees.

Table 4.12 Social Strategies carried out by Student Teachers.

Statements concerning Social Strategies (SILL – Part D)	
1 If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again. 2 I ask questions in English.	USUALLY USED
3 I ask for help from English speakers. 4 I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk. 5 I practice English with other students. 6 I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.	SOMETIMES USED

In conclusion and in spite of the low average results, findings revealed that a large number of learners enrolled in the English and French program reported a high or medium performance in social strategy use which leads to believe that most student teachers are seemingly interested in learning and practicing English with others so as to improve their language competence.

Direct and Indirect Language Learning Strategies

With a view to providing an overview of research findings, this reporting phase is related to the general results conveying which language learning strategies have a remarkable influence on the student teachers enrolled in the English and French program. Therefore, a fair abridgment of the overall averages on the six categories concerning direct and indirect learning strategies is compiled in Table 4.13 and it might answer the question "Which language learning strategies do the English and French program students tend to use more frequently to enhance their communicative competence?"

First of all, it would be meaningful to stress that even though a few surveyed student teachers reported a low average in using direct and indirect language learning strategies, there appears to be a scarce disregard for affective and social strategies among some learners since the use of these strategies was rated as low in 18% of the university enrollees (See Table 4.13). In other words, a small disquieting number of student teachers apparently downplay emotional aspects when learning English and they probably feel reluctant to extend their language interaction out of the classroom which undoubtedly could become a hindrance for the development of communicative competence.

By contrast, a considerable number of 62% of the English and French program students positively scored a medium average on memory strategy use, whereas cognitive strategies were also proven to be sometimes used by 52% of the university enrollees. Likewise and despite of the results indicating a low average in affective strategy use, this category surprisingly reached a medium average since 58% of the surveyed student teachers reported using affective strategies every once in a while. However, this prevalent tendency leads to consider that such strategies which help learners remember more

effectively, understand and produce the language and manage their own emotions should occur more regularly among student teachers.

Table 4.13 Overall Averages on Language Learning Strategy Use

		LOW		MEDIUM		HIGH	
		Frequency	Relative Frequency	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Frequency	Relative Frequency
DIRECT	**Memory**	6	12%	31	62%	13	26%
	Cognitive	5	10%	26	52%	19	38%
	Compensation	4	8%	20	40%	26	52%
INDIRECT	**Metacognitive**	4	8%	13	26%	33	66%
	Affective	9	18%	29	58%	12	24%
	Social	9	18%	21	42%	20	40%

Barchart for Overall Averages on Language Learning Strategy Use
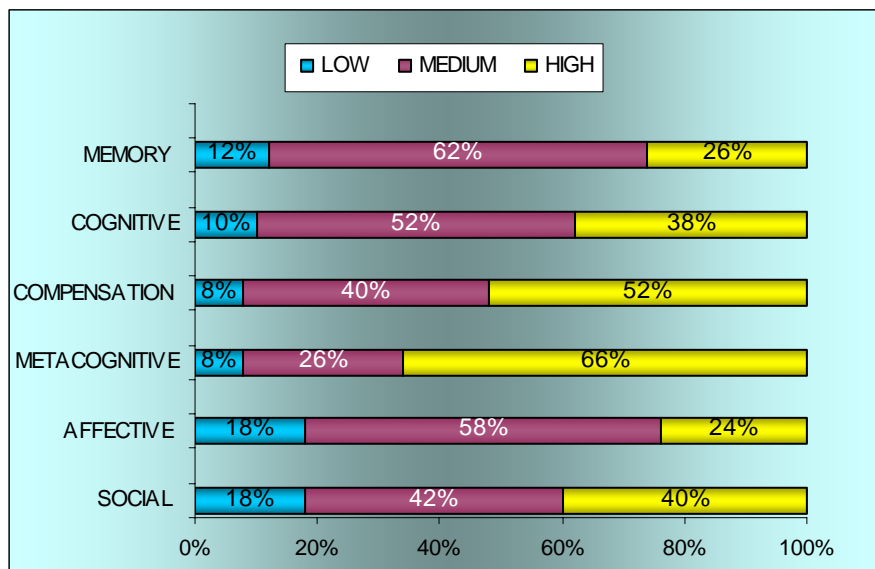
On the other hand, results revealed that indirect strategies regarding aspects of metacognition apparently have a remarkable influence on the English and French program students since 66% of them successfully reported a high performance in

metacognitive strategy use, as shown in Table 4.13. This perfectly means that strategies like paying attention, setting goals and objectives, overseeing and managing one's own language learning and seeking for practice opportunities, among others techniques, are the most highly-frequently used strategies that student teachers carry out to organize and evaluate their own language learning, and therefore to enhance their English competence.

As far as direct language learning strategies are concerned, compensation strategies resulted in second place carried out by 52% of the surveyed student teachers who find it supportive to use synonyms, circumlocutions, gesturing or guessing from the context in order to overcome knowledge gaps when using English in oral or written communication. Finally, the third category that is most frequently used among the participants concerns social strategies indicated by 40% of the enrollees who scored a high average, perhaps because of their free determination or even solicited practice to learn and produce English with others (See Table 4.13).

In general terms and according to the research findings, it might be said that the use of both direct and indirect language learning strategies is, to some extent, satisfactory among the English and French program students. Furthermore, during their language learning process, it becomes evident how metacognitive and compensation strategies play an influential role in most of the university enrollees who reported using these strategies highly frequently.

Learning Strategy Use with Regard to Gender

In this descriptive study gender was considered as a variable in strategy choice among student teachers learning English as a Foreign Language, hence, this final part of the analysis is intended to provide a broad report in strategy use between male and female students enrolled in the English and French program at the University of Nariño. As it

can be observed, overall high averages reported by the participants in each category with regard to gender were compiled in Table 4.14 and it might answer the question "Which learning strategies are more highly-frequently used by male and female EFL student teachers?"

Table 4.14 High Averages on Learning Strategy Use with Regard to Gender

		MALE		FEMALE	
		Frequency	Relative Frequency	Frequency	Relative Frequency
DIRECT	**Memory**	2	4.55%	8	18.18%
	Cognitive	8	18.18%	8	18.18%
	Compensation	7	15.91%	14	31.82%
INDIRECT	**Metacognitive**	13	29.55%	16	36.36%
	Affective	4	9.09%	8	18.18%
	Social	7	15.91%	10	22.73%

Barchart for High Averages on Learning Strategy Use with Regard to Gender
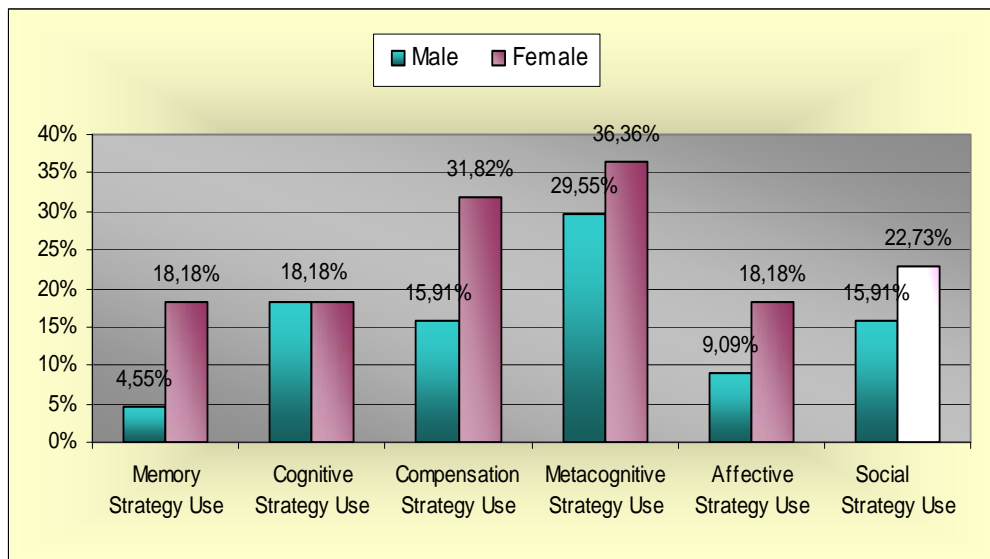
As would be expected, differences between male and female university enrollees were found in the range of strategies used and the frequency in which every category occurs between them.

First of all, research findings revealed that both male and female student teachers scored a higher performance in metacognitive strategy use which indicates that all of them are learners who have effectively developed a variety of strategies involving regulating, arranging, planning and evaluating either their general learning process or specific learning tasks. However, female enrollees successfully reported an average of 36.36% in high metacognitive strategy use while male ones reported and average of 29.55% in the same category, as shown in Table 4.14. This means that female student teachers proved to have a greater tendency to carry out metacognitive skills more highly frequently than did male learners.

On the other hand, bearing on gender as a differential factor in strategy use, there happens to be similar results with social, affective and memory strategies since female student teachers' high averages in these three categories noticeably surpassed those of male student teachers (See Table 4.14). This confirms that females enrolled in the English and French program certainly featured a greater high performance of (1) social strategies including asking questions for clarification/verification and showing willingness to cooperate with peers to accomplish a learning task; (2) affective strategies like becoming aware of emotional aspects to deal with negative feelings such as anxiety or the lack of confidence; and (3) memory strategies involving word association, contextualization or mental representations in order to store new information in the target language and remember it more effectively.

By contrast, Table 4.14 displays that both male and female student teachers scored exactly the same average of 18.18% in high cognitive strategy use which indicates that strategies like getting the idea quickly at listening or reading messages in the target language, taking notes of general ideas or specific points, and recognizing or using patterns to understand and produce the language, occurred likewise among university enrollees regardless of their gender. This particular finding leads to think that high cognitive strategy use is very much alike between male and female student teachers, perhaps, because cognitive strategies are steadily related to learning tasks and learning materials, and student teachers are provided with the same language work in the university classrooms.

On the whole, it might be said that in order to upgrade communicative competence, both male and female learners enrolled in the English and French program reported a satisfactory overall average on high strategy use. However, it is evidently clear how female student teachers proved themselves to have a predominant performance in using both direct and indirect learning strategies when learning English as a foreign language.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout this paper a descriptive study concerning the learning of English as a Foreign Language has been presented in previous chapters providing a thorough description of the research problem along with the theoretical background that relates to it, the methodology used for conducting the study and of course the research findings which were properly analyzed and reported. Therefore, this final chapter contains the conclusions of the study and the recommendations for both pedagogical purposes and further research.

Before outlining the adequate conclusions, however, it would be suitable to highlight other relevant information featured by participants which might have had certain effect on the results.

On the one hand, it is worth standing out that by the time this research was carried out, none of the student teachers who took part in it had received formal instruction on language learning strategies which leads to think that the learning strategy use reported by the participants occurred naturally during their own English learning process.

On the other hand, findings also revealed that regardless of the time the surveyed student teachers have been involved in the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language, all of them agreed to enjoy learning English.

Lastly, when asked to stress the importance of becoming proficient in English, a disquieting number of the university enrollees considered that being interested in the language itself or in learning the language for travel had priority over being interested in becoming good English teachers.

Conclusions

According to the research findings and the learning strategy use reported by the English and French program students, it might be asserted that learning awareness, resourcefulness and good rapport turned out to be remarkable features university enrollees bring out in their attempt to improve communicative competence.

To begin with, unlike several studies of second and foreign language learning in which students reported using metacognitive strategies sporadically, without much sense of their importance and less often than cognitive ones (Oxford, 1990) the English and French program students successfully proved to have learning awareness of how they can become better language learners and enhance their communicative competence by carrying out strategies involving metacognition aspects such as: self-monitoring, planning their learning, setting goals and identifying the purpose of language task.

Secondly, results lead to the conclusion that resourcefulness is another student teachers' feature which fosters them to fall back on compensation strategies very often. Strategies like using circumlocutions and synonyms, gesturing, adjusting the message and guessing intelligently are proven to be quite supportive when student teachers mean to express themselves and overcome language shortcomings, especially at speaking and writing in the target language .

Thirdly, even though a few number of university enrollees seemed to have certain disregard for social strategies, most of the English and French program students know that being determined to create a good rapport with others is truly profitable for both learning and practicing English. Therefore, student teachers are not hesitant to put into effect social strategies involving asking for clarification, verification and studying with their partners to accomplish a language task or succeed in language production.

As far as learning strategy use with regard to gender is concerned, results revealed that female university students tend to use learning strategies significantly more often than male ones including metacognitive, compensation, social, memory and affective strategies.

However, regarding cognitive strategy use, both male and female students enrolled in the English and French program showed a similar tendency to take advantage of strategies such as getting the overall idea quickly and avoiding word-for-word translation, taking notes of important language aspects, repeating English sounds, or using resources for receiving input in the target language. This observation leads to think that cognitive strategies occurred likewise between male and female student teachers since they all have to deal with exactly the same learning tasks and language resources for learning and practicing English.

Finally and generally speaking, it might be said that although the use of affective, memory and cognitive strategies was not as prevalent as metacognitive, compensation and social strategy use, the English and French program students proved to have a fairly good performance in both direct and indirect learning strategies which leads to the conclusion that, when it comes to learning English as a foreign language, student teachers are determined to rely on learning strategies in order to achieve important goals like becoming good language learners and enhance their communicative competence.

Recommendations

Pedagogical Purposes

The main proposal emerging from this descriptive study in language learning strategies certainly meant to sway both university professors and student teachers to become aware of the importance of learning strategies and foster learning strategy practice in every aspect of EFL teacher education.

On the one hand, student teachers should learn more about themselves, identify their own learning preferences, attitudes and learning strategies they tend to use not only in their attempt to improve their communicative competence, but also in their endeavor to become better independent students, and therefore, better future teachers.

On the other hand, university professors should adopt a new teaching role and get strongly involved in student teachers' learning interests, motivations and learning styles. For this reason, they first need to familiarize themselves with the background of language learning strategies, then, they should become proponents of explicit strategy instruction and guide their students through strategy practice in university classrooms. Oxford (1990) points out that teachability is an important feature of learning strategies; that is, they are easy to teach and modify through strategy training which is essential for language education.

In short, teachers aiming at training students in using learning strategies should have adequate knowledge about learners, their goals, motivations and learning strategies. As asserted by Lessard-Clouston (1997) "in addition to developing students' communicative competence, language learning strategies are important because research suggests that training students to use LLS can help them become better language

learners", a recommendation that everyone engaged to the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language should bear in mind.

For Further Research

This descriptive quantitative research focused its attention on the field of teacher education and learning strategy use in an EFL setting providing valuable information which must be seriously considered as the threshold for further studies.

Therefore, drawing on findings reported hereby, it would be advisable to conduct either descriptive qualitative studies geared at any specific category of learning strategies or experimental research in learning strategy training in order to seek for answers to a number of questions such as: How can EFL student teachers achieve a better performance in social/affective strategy use? What is the role of language tasks and learning materials in cognitive strategy use? What types of learning strategies should be taught in language-teaching training at university classrooms? Why do English and French program students prefer using metacognitive strategies rather than cognitive ones? How meaningful would it be to implement explicit strategy training in teacher education? How a specific language skill (reading, writing, listening, speaking) can be enhanced by applying direct or indirect learning strategies? Possibilities of doing research on language learning strategy use at the university are endless.

To sum up, ongoing exploration in the field of EFL teacher education and learning strategies is an issue that concerns everyone: university professors, student teachers and upcoming researchers who are in the tough labor to answer many other questions and support the idea behind this work, to hopefully integrate learning strategy instruction into the language university curriculum.

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APPENDIX

Annex A. Questionnaire.

UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO - FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH AND FRENCH PROGRAM

<u>BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE</u>

1. Name (Optional). _____.

2. Date. _____.

3. Age. _____.

4. Sex. _____.

5. Semester. _____.

6. How long have you been studying English as foreign language?

    _____

7. How do you rate your overall proficiency in English as compared with the

    proficiency of *other students* in your class? (Circle one)

     Excellent   Good   Fair   Poor

8. How do you rate your overall proficiency in English as compared with the

    proficiency of *native speakers of the language*? (Circle one)

     Excellent   Good   Fair   Poor

9. Do you enjoy English-language learning? (Circle one)   Yes   No

10. Why is it important for you to become proficient in English? (Check all that apply)

    _____ Interested in the language
    _____ Interested in the culture
    _____ Interested in being a good English teacher
    _____ Interested in learning the language for travel

UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO - FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH AND FRENCH PROGRAM

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

© R. Oxford, 1989.

<u>Directions</u>

This form of the STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language. Please read each statement and write the response (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) on the separate answer sheet.

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

NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE OF ME means that the statement is <u>very rarely</u> true of you.

USUALLY NOT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true <u>less than half the time</u>.

SOMEWHAT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you <u>about half the time</u>.

USUALLY TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true <u>more than half the time</u>.

ALWAYS TRUE OR ALMOST TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you <u>almost always</u>.

Source: *Language Learning strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know.* Oxford, R. (1990)

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

Read the item and choose a response (1 through 5 as above), and write it in the space after the item on the answer sheet.

- I actively seek out opportunities to talk with speakers of English. _____

¡THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!

Source: *Language Learning strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know.* Oxford, R. (1990)

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)
Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)
© R. Oxford, 1989.

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.
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or a 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.

Source: *Language Learning strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know.* Oxford, R. (1990)

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 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 the 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 English words, I make guesses.

25. When I cannot think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.

26. I make up new words if I do not 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 cannot 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.

Source: *Language Learning strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know.* Oxford, R. (1990)

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 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 a mistake.

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 do not 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.

SILL Answer Sheet

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

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Part A	Part B	Part C	Part D	Part E	Part F
1. _____	10. _____	24. _____	30. _____	39. _____	45. _____
2. _____	11. _____	25. _____	31. _____	40. _____	46. _____
3. _____	12. _____	26. _____	32. _____	41. _____	47. _____
4. _____	13. _____	27. _____	33. _____	42. _____	48. _____
5. _____	14. _____	28. _____	34. _____	43. _____	49. _____
6. _____	15. _____	29. _____	35. _____	44. _____	50. _____
7. _____	16. _____		36. _____		
8. _____	17. _____		37. _____		
9. _____	18. _____		38. _____		
	19. _____				
	20. _____				
	21. _____				
	22. _____				
	23. _____				

NOTE: Write the response (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) that tells HOW TRUE OF YOU THE STATEMENT IS. Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you <u>should</u> be or what other people do. There is no right or wrong answers to the statements.