Journal Of the Islamic University of Gaza, Vol. 12, No.1, P51 – 75, January 2004

The English Language Learning Strategies of An-Najah National University EFL Majors

Wafa Abu Shmais
P.O.Box 711 Nablus- West Bank Palestine
Tel: 2386128 Fax: 092397184 E-Mail: wafash2002@hotmail.com

ملخص: تبحث هذه الدراسة في استراتيجيات اللغة الحالية التي يستخدمها مجموعة من الطلاب العرب المتخصصين في اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة النجاح الوطنية في فلسطين. وتبحث الدراسة كذلك في مدى تكرار استخدام الاستراتيجيات بالنسبة لمتغيران هما الجنس والقدرات والتي قيست عن طريق المرحلة الدراسية للطالب (سنة ثانية، ثالثة، رابعة) والمقدرة الحقيقية للطالب في اللغة الإنجليزية (المعدل التراكمي لمساقات اللغة الإنجليزية) والفاعلية الذاتية (تصور الطلاب الذاتي لمدى نجاحهم في اللغة الإنجليزية). أظهرت النتائج أن طلبة تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة النجاح يستخدمون الاستراتيجيات بتكرار من مرتفع إلى متوسط، وأن أعلى متوسط كان للاستراتيجيات الما – وراء معرفية (Metacognitive) وأن أقلها كان لاستراتيجيات التعويض (Compensation). وبشكل عام، فإن النتائج أظهرت أنه ليس هناك دلالة إحصائية لكل من عاملي الجنس والقدرات على استخدام الاستراتيجيات. وبناءً على النتائج فإن الباحث يوصي بزيادة الاهتمام بتدريب الطلاب على استخدام الاستراتيجيات وخاصة التي تتعلق بالمعرفة والذاكرة والتعويض، وذلك عن طريق دمجها بالنشاطات الصفية المعتادة.

Abstract: this study reports on the current English language learning strategies used by Arabic-speaking English-majors enrolled at An-Najah National University in Palestine. The subjects of the study were (99) male and female students still studying for their B.A. degree. The study also investigates the frequency of strategies use among these students according to gender and proficiency variables. Proficiency is reflected by students' learning level (i.e. sophomore, junior, senior), self-reported proficiency in English (i.e. the students' university average in English courses) and language self-efficacy (i.e. how good the students perceived themselves as English learners). The results of this study showed that An-Najah English majors used learning strategies with high to medium frequency, and that the highest rank (79.6%) was for Metacognitive strategies while the lowest (63%) was for compensation strategies. In general, the results showed that gender and proficiency had no significant differences on the use of strategies. Based on these findings, the researcher recommends that more training should be given in using Cognitive, Memory and Compensation strategies by embedding them into regular classroom activities.

1. Introduction

Within the field of education during the last two decades, a gradual but significant shift has taken place, resulting in less stress on teachers and teaching and greater emphasis on learners and learning (Nunan, 1988). One consequence of

this shift has an increasing awareness and interest in resources for learning styles and language learning strategies in foreign and second language teaching and learning. Researchers such as Oxford (1990); Cohen (1987); and O'Mallay and Chamot (1990) have stressed that effective learners use a variety of different strategies and techniques in order to solve problems that they face while acquiring or producing the language. One focus of research in the area of EFL has been that of the identification of how learners process new information and what kinds of strategies they employ to understand, learn or remember the information.

This study explores the use of learning strategies as an important factor in the success of EFL learners. The scarcity of research on the language learning strategies (LLSs) of Arab students has encouraged the researcher to investigate these strategies in the light of the following questions in the current research:

1. What are the LLSs that are most frequently used by Arab EFL majors at An-Najah University in Palestine?
2. Is there a significant difference in strategy use dut to gender?
3. Is there a significant difference in strategy use due to language proficiency as reflected by three variables: students' university average, learning level and language self-efficacy beliefs (i.e. how good learners perceived themselves to be in English).

In order to measure strategy use, Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was used. (Appendix 1)

This paper then aims at identifying the English language learning strategies that are most frequently used by An-Najah University English majors. It is also hoped that this study will contribute to the varied literature on the significant differences of learners' strategy use due to gender and proficiency.

2. Background

In most of the research on language learning strategies, the primary concern has been on identifying what good language learners do to learn a second or foreign language. Like general learning strategies, English language learning strategies include those techniques that learners use to remember what they have learnt- their storage and retrieval of new information (Rubin, 1987:19). LLSs also include receptive strategies which deal with receiving the message and productive strategies which relate to communication (Brown, 1994; Chamot and Kupper, 1989). LLSs have been classified into several different ways. O'Malley et al (1985a: 582-584) categorized strategies into metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective. They found that most importance was given to the metacognitive strategies (i.e. those that have a planning, directing or monitoring). Oxford (1990) indicated that LLSs, are steps taken by the learners in order to improve language training and develop language competence. Moreover, she divided the strategies into direct and indirect infolving information, memory behaviors, vocabulary knowledge, grammar rules, thought and mental processes.

Research into language learning strategies began in the 1960s. particularly, development in cognitive psychology influenced much of the research done on

language learning strategies. In most of the researh on language learning strategies, the primary concern has been on identifying what good language learners report they do to learn a second language (Rubin, 1987).

Rubin classified strategies in term of processes contributing directly or indirectly to language learning. In addition, O'Malley et al. 1985, Oxfor, 1990, Cohen et al. 1996, and many others studied strategies used by language learners during the process of foreign language learning.

From the research to date, it is evident that all language learners use language learning strategies of some kind; however, the frequency and variety of use vary between different learners and depend on a number of variables (Chamot and Kupper, 1989). In general, it is agreed that the use of language learning strategies is positively related to language proficiency. It appears that good language learners orchestrate and combine their use of particular types of strategies in effective ways (Chamot and Kupper, 1989; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1993). Research has indicated that more proficient learners seem to employ a variety of strategies in many situations than do less proficient learners. Rossi-Le (1989) found that more proficient EFL students used self-management strategies such as planning, evaluation an formal practice significantly more often than less proficient students.

Investigations involving language learners often showed that the most successful learners tended to use learning strategies that are suitable to the task, material, self-objective, needs, motivation and stage of learning (Oxford, 1990). Good language learners seemed to possess abilities to succeed while others lacked those abilities (Rubin and Thompson 1994). Good learners, according to them, can find their own way by taking charge of their learning, organizing their language information and making their own opportunities for practicing using the language. In addition, they use linguistic knowledge and contextual cues to help them in comprehension while learning a foreign language.

Research has also shown that factors other than language proficiency exert influence on the strategies that the language learners select and use. For example, gender was one factor that has been explored by many researchers. In many EFL strategy frequency studies involving gender, the results have usually favored females as more frequent users of strategies (for instance, Green, 1992; Noguchi, 1991; Green and Oxford, 1993; Oxford, 1993). Among the other factors that affect strategy use and have been researched are cultural background (Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995), learning styles (Sheorey, 1998; Oxford et. al, 1991), learners' self-efficacy beliefs (Yang, Nae-Dong 1999), and LS stage of learning (Oxford, 1990a). The above mentioned factors have been proposed as mediators of language strategy use.

Oxford (1990) revealed that research has overemphasized the metacognitive and cognitive strategies at the expense of the other types. She added that studies on Affective and Social strategies are infrequent in L2 research perhaps because these behaviors are not researched frequently by L2 researchers, and because learners are not familiar with paying attention to their own feelings and

social relationships as part of the L2 learning process.

Since language learning strategies are considered as a good sign of haw good learners are in solving the problems they face in the learning process. It is hoped that this study will give English teachers valuable information on how their students process information, plan and select the most suitable strategies to understand or solve a problem. As a result teachers will be able to help their students become better language learners by training them in using the appropriate strategies. The results of the study will contribute to this field by giving information on the strategies that Arab learners use and how they use them to understand information.

There are, of course, important pedagogical implications for such findings. For example, the identification of a relationship between strategy preference and cultural background may have important implications for the development of teaching strategies and for training learners in strategy use in particular cultural contexts (Chamot and Kupper, 1989).

Since language learning strategies are considered as a good sign of how good learners are in solving the problems they face in the learning process, it is hoped that this study will give English teachers valuable information on how their students process information, plan and select the most suitable strategies to understand or solve a problem. As a result, teachers will be able to help their students become better language learners by training them in using the appropriate strategies. The results of the study will contribute to this field by giving information on the strategies that Arab learners use and how they use them to understand information.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Subjects

The population of students majoring in English at the time of the study was 120 students divided into 30 males and 90 females. The total number of the students who were available during the distribution of the questionnaire was 99 students.

The 99 students who participated in this study were all English majors enrolled at An-Najah National University in Palestine. There were 19 males and 80 females. All the subjects had studied English formally for 8 years and were to complete 84 credit hours (63 as required and 21 as elective courses) as part of their Bachelor Degree's requirements in English Language and Literature. The majority of the subjects (47) were seniors, (27) were juniors and (25) were sophomores.

The students were also asked to report on their actual progress in English by providing their university cumulative average of the English courses they have taken up to the point of completing the questionnaire. The averages were classified as follows:

80%-89%= very good, 70%-79%=good, taking into consideration that the passing average is 60%. There were no averages over 90% or below 70%.

As a measure to language self efficacy or students' perception of

themselves as learners, the students were asked to rate themselves on a scale from one to three to indicate how successful they thought they were at English (listening, writing, speaking, reading) 1= very good, 2= good, 3= poor. Presumably, individuals who believe that they are successful students also believe that their performance is high due to the use of good learning styles and strategies. As a result, (41) students perceived themselves as very good students, (52) as good students and (6) as poor students (Table 1).

The subjects were distributed according to the independent variables as in Table (1).

Table (1)
Subject distribution according to independent variables
(N = 99)

Gender		Learning Level		Self-efficacy	Uni-Average
Male	Female	2nd year sophomore	3rd.		

existing sctemata and for analyzing an classifying it. Cognitive strategies are responsible for deep processing, forming and revising internal mental models and receiving and producing messages in the target language (e.g., repeating, getting the idea quickly, analyzing and taking notes).

- Compensation strategies (6 items) include such strategies as guessing and using gestures. Such strategies are needed to fill any gaps in the knowledge of the language. (e.g., switching to the mother tongue, using other clues, getting help and using a synonym).

On the other hand, indirect strategies are divided into Metacognitive, Affective and Social:

- Metacognitive strategies (9 items) are techniques used for organizing, planing, focusing and evaluating one's own learning. (e.g., linking new information with already known one, seeking practice opportunities, and self-monitoring).
- Affective strategies (6 items) are used for handling feelings, attitudes and motivations. (e.g., lowering anxiety by use of music, encouraging oneself and discussing feelings with others).
- Social strategies (6 items) are used for facilitating interaction by asking questions, and cooperating with others in the learning process, (eg. Asking for classification, cooperating with others and developing cultural understanding).

In addition to the strategy items on the SILL, the researcher consulted English teachers at the English Department at An-Najah National University on strategies used by their students whether consciously or unconsciously. The researcher's experience as a foreign language teacher also enabled me to identify strategies that students were familiar with and could relate to. As a result, the researcher generated a list of strategies and added them to the 50 items of the SILL. The generated list which contained 10 items was added to the SILL questionnaire under the title "Others", to indicate that those 10 items were not part of the SILL. (The SILL appears as appendix 1, p.30).

The new 10 items which were titled "Others" included different strategy items that could be fitted under Metacognitive, Social, Memory and Functional Practice strategies. The new items were given to two indepenent Egnlish teachers to check matters like repetition, inconsistency and comparison. Following is a list of these 10 items as numbered in the questionnaire (appendix 1, p. 33)

51. I don't use a dictionary to understand unfamiliar words.
52. I memorize meaning of words in a list form (out of context).
53. I respond in English if asked a question in English.
54. I memorize English grammar rules in order to apply them.
55. I give self tests to prepare for exams.
56. I rehearse silently in English before speaking in English.
57. I ask others to test me on what I memorized in English.
58. I try to think in English.
59. I memorize new English words by grouping them.
60. I repeat what read to enhance my comprehension.

The final version of the questionnaire included 60 items to which the subjects responded on a 5-point Likert scale (1= I never do this; 2= I seldom do this; 3= I sometimes do this; 4= I usually do this; 5= I always do this).

The items were translated into Arabic by the researcher herself and checked by two Arabic linguists and a translation instructor taking into consideration that the items retained their essential meaning and that the translation was easily understood. In this study Cronbach's alpha for Reliability was (0.83).

3.3 Procedure and Data Collection:

The questionnaires, distributed by the researcher were in Arabic. They were given out during students' regular English classes in the first semester, 2000. The researcher got back 99 questionnaires and their responses were analyzed. The subjects were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary. The subjects did not give their names; only their gender, average and level of learning were required.

3.4 Item analysis

The ANOVA test was used to determine significant variation in mean strategy use by gender and proficiency. Wilks Lambda and Sidak tests were used to determine differences across all the strategies by gender and proficiency.

Results

Results of the first question: what are the most frequently used strategies?

The results of strategy analysis on items identified seven strategy groups. The seven groups were:

1. Memory strategies (MEM);
2. Cognitive strategies (COG);
3. Compensation strategies (COM);
4. Metacognitive strategies (MET);
5. Affective strategies (AFF);
6. Social strategies (SOC); and
7. "Others" strategies (OTH) which include a group of 10 different strategies items that the researcher added to the above six strategy groups on Oxford's SILL.

Table (2) presents rank ordering of the strategies according to their frequency of usage. The means and percentages of table 2 show that Metacognitive strategies have the highest mean (3.98) which indicates a high use of Metacognitive strategies followed by Affective, Others, Social, Cognitive and Memory, while Compensation strategies ranked the lowest mean (3.15). We also notice that one of the seven strategies groups (Metacognitive) falls in the high range, while the other 6 strategy groups fall in the medium range.

Table 2

Means and percentages of strategy groups

Strategies	Mean	%	Degree	Rank
Metacognitive	3.98	79.6	High	1
Affective	3.36	67.2	Medium	2
"Others"	3.35	67	Medium	3
Social	3.25	65	Medium	4
Cognitive	3.24	64.8	Medium	5
Memory	3.20	64	Medium	6
Compensation	3.15	63	Medium	7
Total score	3.36	67.2	Medium	

In order to determine the differences at (α = 0.05) among all strategies, Wilks Lambda Test was used, Table (3).

The results of Table (3) using Wilks lambda Test showed that there were significant differences at (α = 0.05) among all strategies.

Table (3)

Results of Repeated MANOVA (Wilks Lambda)

Statistic	Value	F value	df	Error	Sig.
Wilks Lambda	0.46	18.009	6	93	0.000

In order to determine the multiple differences at (α=0.05) among all strategies, Sidak Test was conducted as in Table (4). Multiple comparisons showed differences between:

Memory and Metacognitive in favor of Metacognitive strategies
Cognitive and Metacognitive in favor of Metacognitive strategies
Compensation and Metacognitive in favor of Metacognitive strategies
Metacognitive and Affective in favor of Metacognitive strategies
Metacognitive and Social in favor of Metacognitive strategies
"Others" and Metacognitive in favor of Metacognitive strategies

Table (4)

Sidak results for multiple comparisons

Strategy	MEM	COG	COM	MET	AFF	SOC	OTH
MEM		-0.03	.05	* -.77	-.15	-.04	-.15
COG			9.42	* -.73	-.11	-1.01	-.11
COM				*-.83	-.20	-.10	-.20
MET					*.62	*-.72	*.62
AFF						-10	2.25
SOC							-.10
OTH							

The results indicate that the differences were all in favor of Metacognitive strategies.

Table (5) presents the items that constitute each strategy in addition to frequency of usage and mean of every single item in descending order.

The table shows that most of the items with the highest mean are

Metacognitive Strategy items. For example: items number 33 (I try to find out how to be a better learner of English), 38 (I think about my progress in learning English), 32 (I pay attention when someone is speaking English) and 30 (I try to find as many ways as I can use my English). The items are numbered from 1-60 and appear in Appendix 1.

Table (5)
Strategy preference of the items by their means and frequency of usage

Rank	Item no.	Strategy*	Mean	Rank	Item no.	Strategy*	Mean
1.	33	MET	3.73	2.	15	COG	3.34
3.	59	OTH	3.69	4.	52	OTH	3.32
5.	7	MEM	3.68	6.	24	COG	3.30
7.	38	MET	3.64	8.	45	SOC	3.30
9.	32	MET	3.59	10	3	MEM	3.29
11	17	COG	3.59	12	11	COG	3.29
13	30	MET	3.56	14	39	AFF	3.29
15	60	OTH	3.53	16	43	AFF	3.27
17	8	MEM	3.53	18	42	AFF	3.25
19	37	MET	3.52	20	57	OTH	3.24
21	10	COG	3.51	22	14	COG	3.24
23	55	OTH	3.48	24	23	COG	3.23
25	34	MET	3.48	26	27	COM	3.22
27	31	MET	3.47	28	16	COG	3.21
29	35	MET	3.47	30	47	SOC	3.20
31	44	AFF	3.46	32	13	COG	3.20
33	41	AFF	3.15	34	48	SOC	3.18
35	1	MEM	3.44	36	28	COM	3.17
37	40	AFF	3.43	38	29	COM	3.15
39	18	COG	3.43	40	22	COG	3.13
41	12	COG	3.43	42	19	COG	3.10
43	54	OTH	3.43	44	2	MEM	3.10
45	46	SOC	3.41	46	50	SOC	3.08
47	36	MET	3.41	48	26	COM	3.07
49	9	MEM	3.39	50	25	COM	3.00
51	4	MEM	3.38	52	20	COG	2.96
53	53	OTH	3.38	54	5	MEM	2.80
55	58	OTH	3.37	56	21	COG	2.79
57	56	OTH	3.37	58	51	OTH	2.77
59	49	SOC	3.36	60	6	MEM	2.25

* MEM= Memory; COG= Cognitive; COM= Compensation; MET= Metacognitive; AFF= Affective; SOC= Social; OTH= “Others”.

Results of the second question:

Is there a significant difference between strategy use and gender?

To answer the question on the significant differences at (α =.05) in strategy use due to gender, the computed T.value of all strategies and total score were respectively (.11, .91, 1.21, .90, 1.20, 1.04, .38, 1.08). Table 6 shows that all of these values are less than critical value 1.98 which means that there is no main effect for gender at (α=.05) on strategy use.

Table (6)

Results of T. test for the differences in strategy use according to gender variable

Strategy	M		F		T.	Sig.
	M	Sd	M	Sd		
Memory	3.19	.68	3.21	.57	.11	.90
Cognitive	3.34	.60	3.22	.47	.91	.36
Compensation	3.32	.78	3.11	.65	1.21	.22
Metacognitive	3.96	.73	3.98	.83	.90	.92
Affective	3.51	.66	3.32	.61	1.20	.23
Social	3.42	.84	3.21	.73	1.04	.29
"Others"	3.40	.51	3.34	.58	.38	.69
Total Score	3.44		3.34		1.08	.28

However, the result of table 6 indicates that male students were more frequent users of strategies than females, and that males surpassed females in the use of almost all the strategies, except for two strategy groups, Memory and Metacognitive where females marked higher means.

Results related to the third question:

Is there any significant difference between strategy use and proficiency? Language proficiency was examined as reflected by three individual variables: university average, level of learning and self-efficacy.

a- **University average**. The students were classified into two groups according to their University general point averages (GPA); those whose averages were lower than 80% (less proficient) and those whose averages were higher than 80% (the more proficient).

The results of table 7 showed that the computed T. value on all strategies and total score were (.51, .42, .68, .24, .02, .62, .04). All these values are less than 1.98 which means that there are no significant differences at (α=.05) in strategy use due to the students' university average. However, the computed T. test value on Affective and "Others" strategies were respectively (-2.33, -1.99). These two values are more than 1.98 which means that there are significant differences in favor of averages that are less than 80%. Such a result indicates that less proficient students use more frequently Affective and "Others" strategies in order to lower their anxiety, and encourage themselves to store and retrieve information.

Table 7

Results of T. test for the differences in strategy use according to university average

Strategy	80% and above		Less than 80%		T.	Sig.
	M	Sd	M	Sd		
Memory	3.25	.613	3.17	.57	.64	.51
Cognitive	3.30	.49	3.21	.50	.81	.42
Compensation	3.11	.66	3.17	.69	-.41	.68
Metacognitive	4.11	.84	3.91	.79	1.17	.24
Affective	3.17	.63	3.47	.60	-2.33	.02
Social	3.20	.75	3.28	.76	-.48	.62
"Others"	3.21	.56	3.44	.55	-1.99	.04
Total Score	3.33	.41	3.38	.37	.53	.59

b- Learning level

To determine the effect of learning level variable on strategy use, one way ANOVA was used.

Using of ANOVA(F) Test indicated that there were no significant differences on Compensation, Metacognitive, and Affective strategies while there were significant differences on Memory, Cognitive; Social and "Others" strategies, as shown in table 8.

Table 8

Results of ANOVA (F) Test for the differences in strategy use according to learning level

		S um of	Df	Mean	F	Sig.
A	Between	3.120	2	1.560	4.708	.01
	Within Groups	31.810	96	.331		
	Total	34.930	98			
B	Between	1.815	2	.908	3.811	.02
	Within Groups	22.862	96	.238		
	Total	24.677	98			
C	Between	1.546	2	.773	1.672	.19
	Within Groups	44.381	96	.462		
	Total	45.926	98			
D	Between	3.264E-02	2	1.632E-	.024	.97
	Within Groups	65.050	96	.676		
	Total	65.083	98			
E	Between	1.169	2	.584	1.501	.22
	Within Groups	37.389	96	.389		
	Total	38.558	98			
F	Between	3.588	2	1.794	3.268	.04
	Within Groups	52.705	96	.549		
	Total	56.293	98			
G	Between	1.898	2	.949	3.062	.05
	Within Groups	29.760	96	.310		
	Total	31.658	98			
TOT SCO RE	Between	.191	2	9.571E-	.643	.52
	Within Groups	14.282	96	.149		
	Total	14.473	98			

Scheffe's post-hoc test was used to show comparisons between means of strategies according to learning level, as in tables (9), (10), (11), and (12).

The strategies that showed significant differences were Memory strategies, Cognitive strategies, Social strategies and "Others" strategies. The results of Scheffe's post-hoc test indicated that there were significant differences between means of Memory strategies according to learning level in favor of the sophomores. This indicates that sophomores use more Memory strategies(Table 9).

The results also indicated significant differences in means of Cognitive strategies in favor of the juniors (Table 10), and differences in Social strategies in favor of the sophomores and the juniors (table11). Finally, there were significant differences in means of "Others" strategies in favor of the sophomores (Table 12).

Table 9

Scheffe's Post-hoc test for Memory strategies

Learning level	Mean	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.
Soph.	3.39		0.03	.36 *
Jun.	3.36			.33
Sen.	3.02			

* significant at ($\alpha = 0.05$)

Table 10

Scheffe's Post-hoc test for cognitive strategies

Learning level	Mean	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.
Soph.	3.24		.21	.11
Jun.	3.46			.33 *
Sen.	3.13			

* significant at ($\alpha = 0.05$)

Table 11

Scheffe's Post-hoc test for Social strategies

Learning level	Mean	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.
Soph.	3.09		.32	.36 *
Jun.	3.06			.36 *
Sen.	3.45			

* significant at ($\alpha = 0.05$)

Table 12

Scheffe's Post-hoc test for Other strategies

Learning level	Mean	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.
Soph.	3.20		.44 *	- .29
Jun.	3.25			.25
Sen.	3.50			

* significant at ($\alpha = 0.05$)

c- Self efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to personal judgments of performance capabilities in a given domain of activities (Schunk, 1985, p. 208).

Schunk maintains that people confidently perform activities that they judge themselves capable of managing, but they avoid those they believe exceed their ability. In addition, people who have a stronger sense of self-efficacy tend to exert greater efforts to meet challenges and tend to make decisions on when and how to use strategies to solve problems. Nae- Dong Yang (1999) found that language learners' self-efficacy beliefs about learning English were strongly related to their use of all types of learning strategies.

As a measure of self-efficacy in this study, the subjects were asked to rate how successful they perceived themselves to be in English.

The subjects' self efficacy was measured in three terms: very good, good, and poor. Table 13 shows the strategy means according to self efficacy.

Table 13

Strategy means according to self efficacy

Strategy	V.good	good	poor
Memory	3.32	3.14	3.00
Cognitive	3.47	3.04	3.45
Compensation	3.29	3.04	3.11
Metacognitive	4.12	3.85	4.14
Affective	3.34	3.33	3.69
Social	3.26	3.25	3.25
"Others"	3.35	3.38	3.23

To determine the differences in strategy use according to self-efficacy, ANOVA (F) Test was used as in table (14).

Table 14

Domai	Source of	S um of	Df	Mean	F	Sig.
A	Between	1.030	2	.515	1.459	.238
	Within Groups	33.899	96	.353		
	Total	34.930	98			
B	Between	4.478	2	2.239	10.642	.000
	Within Groups	20.198	96	.210		
	Total	24.677	98			
C	Between	1.466	2	.733	1.582	.211
	Within Groups	44.461	96	.463		
	Total	45.926	98			
D	Between	1.860	2	.930	1.412	.249
	Within Groups	63.223	96	.659		
	Total	65.083	98			
E	Between	.708	2	.354	.898	.411
	Within Groups	37.850	96	.394		
	Total	38.558	98			
F	Between	8.038E-03	2	4.019E-	.007	.993
	Within Groups	56.285	96	.586		
	Total	56.293	98			
G	Between	.122	2	6.092E-	.185	.831
	Within Groups	31.537	96	.329		
	Total	31.658	98			
TOTS CORE	Between	.612	02	.306	2.118	.126
	Within Groups	13.861	96	.144		
	Total	14.473	98			

The ANOVA (F) test indicated that there were no significant differences for all strategies except for Memory strategies. To determine the significant differences in strategies according to self efficacy, Scheffes pos-hoc test was used.

The result of Scheffe's post-hoc showed that there is a significant difference at ($\alpha = 0.05$) on Cognitive strategies between very good and good in favor of very good. However, there is no significant difference between very good and poor, and good and poor as shown in table 15.

Table 15

Scheffe's Post-hoc test for Cognitive strategies

Self efficacy	v.good	good	poor
v.good		.42 *	.02
Good			-.40
Poor			

Discussion and implications

A close examination of the results of this study reveals that An-Najah university students' learning strategy use as measured by the SILL, ranges from high (3.98) to medium (3.15), with Metacognitive strategies used more frequently (3.98). Metacognitive strategies involve exercising "executive control" over one's language learning through planning, monitoring, and evaluating. They are techniques that are used for organizing, planning, focusing and evaluating one's learning. In general, these strategies help learners to gain control over their emotions and motivations related to language learning through self-monitoring. The high use of Metacognitive strategies among Palestinians is similar to that observed among students from Asian countries like Japan, China, Korea and Taiwan as reported in some of the studies on Asian students (e.g. Sheorey, 1998; Oxford et al., 1990).

Compensation strategies, which ranked the lowest (3.15) are strategies that enable students to make up for missing knowledge in the process of comprehending or producing the target language. However, the students were reluctant to use Compensation strategies, e.g. they did not use gestures when they had difficulty producing the language, and they didn't make up new words when they did not know the right ones.

The researcher believes that the use of some individual strategies could be attributed to culture and educational system in Palestine where students have very limited opportunities to use functional practice strategies especially in large classes. Moreover, students are more concerned with passing exams and respond to questions that are directly related to the content in their prescribed textbooks. Needless to say, rote memorizing is frequently used by students who learn the language as isolated fragments. Example of such items were (52) "I memorize English grammar", and (59) "I memorize new English words by grouping them".

With regards to the effects of gender and proficiency on strategy use, the results of this study appear inconsistent with those of other studies. This study indicated no significant differences at (α=.05) for the two variables gender and proficiency. However, Kaylani (1996) examined the influence of gender and motivation on (12th grade) high school students in Jordan. She found that there was a strong relationship between gender, motivation and the strategies that these students employed, and that females and more motivated students reported high use of strategies. The differences between her study and the current study may be attributed to the differences in the students' learning level in both studies. Kaylani's subjects are school students while the subjects in this study are university English majors who are supposed to be more aware of the process of learning

English as a foreign language and of the strategies they employ to achieve this goal.

The results of this study, however, showed that there is a positive relationship between strategy use and language proficiency as reflected by average, learning level and self efficacy. It can be noticed that the students with high proficiency (i.e. those whose averages were more than 80%, the juniors and those whose self efficacy was very good) used more Cognitive strategies than less proficient students (i.e., those whose averages were less than 80%, the sophomores and those whose self efficacy was poor). Such results indicate that more proficient students are aware of their needs and look for more opportunities to practice the language. The use of more Cognitive strategies by more proficient students can be attributed to these students' need to process and revise internal models in order to receive and produce the language. These students depend on repeating, analyzing and getting the idea. Such strategies are necessary for English majors.

It is worth mentioning that the list of 10 items that was generated by the researcher and appeared under "Others" ranked number three according to their mean (3.35) as shown in Table 2. This mixture of strategies was used more by males (3.40), seniors (3.50), those whose averages were less than 80% (3.44), and by good students (3.38). The adoption of "Others" strategies indicates that the students were actively involved in adopting a number of strategies that enhanced their learning. Moreover, the adoption of the some memory strategies shows the students' awareness and need to entering, storing and retrieving information. Such strategies are direct and vital for learning a foreign language.

The most important implication of this study is the need to provide students with further opportunities to use LLSs more frequently since the overall strategy use by the subjects under study falls in the medium range. The less frequent strategies in this study (Cognitive, Memory and Compensation) can form the core of a programme of classroom strategy instruction. O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 157-59) introduces the following steps to strategy instruction:

> … the teacher first identifies or shows students for their current language strategies, explains the rationale and application for using additional learning strategies, provides opportunities and materials for practice, and evaluate or assist students to evaluate their degree of success with new learning strategies.

The teacher's role in strategy training is an important one. The teacher should learn about the students, their interest, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn what language learning strategies his/her students appear to be using by observing their behavior in class: Do they cooperate with their peers or seem to have much contact outside of class with proficient foreign language users? Do they ask for clarification, verification or correction? Besides observing their behavior in class, the teacher can have adequate knowledge about the students, their goals, motivations, language learning strategies, and their understanding of the course to be taught. It is a fact that each learner within the same classroom may

have different learning styles and varied awareness of the use of strategies. The language teacher should provide a wide range of learning strategies in order to fulfil different learning styles that meet the needs and expectations of his students who possessing different learning styles, motivations, strategy preferences, etc.

In addition to the students, the language teacher should also analyze his textbook to findout whether the textbook already includes language learning strategies or language learning strategies training. The language teacher should look for new texts or other teaching materials if language learning strategies are not already included within his materials.

The language teacher should also study his own teaching method and overall classroom style. Analyzing his lesson plans, the language teacher can determine whether his lesson plans give learners chance to use a variety of learning styles and strategies or not. The teacher can see whether his teaching allows learners to approach the task at hand in different ways or not. The language teacher can also be aware of whether his strategy training is implicit, explicit, or both. It should be emphasized that questioning himself about what he plans to do before each lesson and evaluating his lesson plan after the lesson in terms of strategy training, the teacher can become better prepared to focus on language learning strategies and strategy training during the process of his teaching.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study aimed at examining the language learning strategies of a group of Palestinian English-major students studying at An-Najah University. The results showed that these students were high to medium users of strategies. Furthermore, Matacognitive strategies marked the highest usage which indicated that such strategies could be related to cultural and educational background differences. The tests showed no significant difference for gender and proficiency on overall strategy use.

It is obvious that language learning strategies facilitate the learning of the target language by the language learner. Language learners in general use language learning strategies in the learning process. Since the factors like age, gender, personality, motivation, self-concept, life-experience, learning style, etc. affect the way in which language learners learn the target language, it is not reasonable to assume that all language learners use the same good language learning strategies or should be trained in using and developing the same strategies to become successful learners.

Both learners and teachers need to become aware of the learning styles and strategies through strategy instruction. Attempts to teach students to use learning strategies (called strategy training or learner training) have produced good results (Rubin, J. & Thompson, 1994). The main objective of such attempts is to allow students to become more aware of their preferred learning strategies and to help them become more responsible for meeting their own objectives. Such objectives can be only achieved when students are trained in strategy use so that they become more independent and effective.

However, before teaching students how to use strategies effectively, teachers should be trained in strategy instruction and assessment. They should also be trained how to implement strategy instruction inside their classrooms. The strategies- Based Instruction (SBI) approach adopted by Cohen, Weaver, & Li, (1996) emphasized the role of SBI in the foreign language classroom. In addition, Cohen & Li advise teachers to systematically introduce and reinforce learning strategies that help students use the target language more effectively and thus improve their performance. Oxford (1990) suggests that strategy training can be achieved after familiarizing the students with the LLSs and providing them with opportunities for practicing these strategies through integrating them into the classroom instructional plan and embedding them into regular class activities.

Thus there is a need for more comprehensive research on a wide rage of variables affecting LLSs employed by Arab learners such as cultural background, beliefs, learning style, motivation, attitude, etc. Moreover, research on the frequency of use of the social and affective strategies and choice of given strategies is recommended since it is helpful for both learners and teachers.

In conclusion, strategy instruction research is important in assessing learners strategies, therefore, there is a need for conducting research that will pave the way for building the theory that seems necessary for more language learning strategies work to be relevant to current foreign language teaching practice.

References

- Brown, H. (1994). "*Principles of Language Learning Teaching"*. Third edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632: Prentice-Hall Regents.
- Chamot, A. U. & Kupper, L. (1989). "Learning strategies in foreign language instruction". "Foreign Language Annals", Vol. (22), pp. 13-24.
- Cohen, A. D. (1987) "*Studying learner strategies. How we get the information"*. In Wenden, A. L. and Rubin, J. (eds); Learner Strategies in Language Learning, pp. 31-42. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice- Hall.
- Cohen, A. D., Weaver, S.J., & Li, T. (1996). "The impact of strategies_based instruction on speaking a foreign language". University of Minnesota, Minneapolis: CARLA Working Paper Series #4. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 394322).
- Green, J., Oxford, R. (1993). "A closer look at learning strategies, L2 Proficiency, and gender". TESOL Quarterly, Vol. (29), pp.261-297.
- Green, J.M. (1992). "*Additional analyses of Puerto Rican Strategy data"*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Puerto Rico al Mayaguez.
- Kaylani, C. (1996). "The Influence of Gender and Motivation on EFL learning Strategy Use in Jordan". In Revecca L. Oxford (Ed.), pp. 75-88.
- Noguchi, T. (1991). "*Questionnaire for learners"*. Tottori University, Tottori, Japan.
- Nunan, D. (1988). "The Learner- Centred Curriculum". Cambridge: University Press.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. (1990). "Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition". Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- O'Mally et al. (1985). "Learning Strategy Application with student of English as a secon language" in TESOL Quarterly 19:557-584.
- Oxford, R. L. (1993). "Instructional Implications of gender differences in language learning styles and strategies". Applied Language Learning Vol. (4), pp. 65-94.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). "Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know". Newburg House/ Harper & Row, New York. Now Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Oxford, R. L., and Burry-Stock, Judith A. (1995). "*Assessing the use of language learning strategies worldwide with the ESL/EFL version of the strategy inventory for language learning (SILL)".* University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, USA.
- Oxford, R., L., Eherman, M. E. and Lavine, R. Z. (1991). "*Style wars:* Teacher-*student style conflicts in the language classroom*". In S.S. Magnan (ed). Challenges in the 1990s for College Foreign Language Programs, pp. 1-25. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Oxford, R.L. (1990a). "*Language learning strategies and beyond: A look at strategies in the context of styles*". In Magnan, S.S. (ed.), Shifting The Instructional Focus To The Learner, pp 35-55. Middlebury, VT: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
- Rossi- Le, L. (1989) "*Perceptual learning style preferences and their relationship to language learning strategies in adult students of English as a second language"*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Drake University, Des Moines, IA.
- Rubin, J. (1987). "*Learner strategies: Theoretical Assumptions, Research History and Typology"*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Rubin, J. &1 Thompsons I. (1994) "*How to be a more successful language learner"* (2nd ed.). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Schunk, D. J., 1985. "Self-efficacy and classroom learning". Psychology in the schools. 22, 208-223.
- Sheorey, R., (1998). "The state of English and English language teaching in India". TESOL Matters, Vol (8), (4), pp. 1-19.
- Yang, Nae-Dong (1999). "*The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use"*. Department of foreign languages and literature, National Taiwan University, Taipei 10617, Taiwan, ROC.

Appendix 1

Part A

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

Part B

10- I say or write new English words several times.
11- I try to talk like native English speakers.
12- I practice the sounds of English.
13- I use the English words I know in different ways.
14- I start conversations in English.
15- I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.
16- I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.
17- I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.
18- I read for pleasure in English.
19- I look for words in my own language that are similar to new English words.
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 can't 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 can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.

Part D

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

Part E

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.

Part G (Others)

51- I don't use a dictionary to understand unfamiliar words.
52- I memorize meaning of words in a list form (out of context).
53- I respond in English if asked a question in English.
54- I memorize English grammar, rules in order to apply them in speaking and writing.
55- I give self tests to prepare for exams in English.
56- I rehearse silently in English before speaking in English.
57- I ask others to test me on what I memorized in English.
58- I try to think in English.
59- I memorize new English words by grouping them into categories (e.g. synonym, antonym, verb, noun)
60- I repeat what I read more than once to enhance my comprehension.

	لا أفعل	أفعل	أفعل ذلك	أفعل	أفعل ذلك دائماً

		ذلك مطلقاً	ذلك نادراً	أحياناً	ذلك عادة	
1-	أفكر في العلاقة بين ما أعرفه من قبل وبين الأشياء الجديدة التي أتعلمها في الإنجليزية.					
2-	أستعمل كلمات إنجليزية في جملة حتى أتمكن من تذكرها.					
3-	أحاول أن أجد صلة ما بين صوت الكلمة الإنجليزية الجديدة وصورتها حتى أتمكن من تذكرها.					
4-	أتذكر الكلمة الجديدة عن طريق تكوين صورة ذهنية للوضع/ السياق الذي يمكن أن تستعمل به.					
5-	أستخدم القافية لتذكر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.					
6-	أستخدم البطاقات التعليمية لتذكر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.					
7-	أحاول نطق الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.					
8-	أراجع الدروس الإنجليزية غالباً.					
9-	أتذكر الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة أو شبه الجملة عن طريق تذكر مكان وجودها عن الصفحة أو اللوح أو على إشارات الشارع.					
10-	ألفظ وأكتب الكلمات الجديدة أكثر من مرة.					
11-	أحاول أن أتكلم الإنجليزية كالناطقين بها.					
12-	أتدرب على نطق الأصوات					

الإنجليزية.						
13- أستخدم الكلمات الإنجليزية التي أعرفها في طرق مختلفة.						
14- أبادر إلى بدء المحادثة باللغة الإنجليزية.						
15- أشاهد برامج تلفزيونية باللغة الإنجليزية أو أذهب لمشاهدة أفلام بالإنجليزية.						
16- أعمل على كتابة ملاحظات، رسائل أو تقارير باللغة الإنجليزية.						
17- عندما أقرأ قطعة باللغة الإنجليزية أقرأها أولاً بسرعة ثم أعود إليها لأقرأها بدقة وتمعن.						
18- أقرأ الإنجليزية من أجل الاستمتاع.						
19- أبحث عن كلمات في العربية شبيهة بالكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة.						
20- أحاول أن أبحث عن أنماط عندما أدرس بالإنجليزية.						
21- أجد معنى الكلمة الجديدة عن طريق تقسيمها إلى أجزاء ليسهل فهمها.						
22- أحاول أن لا أترجم حرفياً عندما أدرس.						
23- أقوم بعمل تلخيص للمعلومات التي أقرأها أو أسمعها باللغة الإنجليزية.						
24- أحاول أن أتحزر معنى الكلمات غير المألوفة حتى أستطيع فهمها.						
25- أستعمل الإشارات عندما لا أستطيع أن أجد كلمة إنجليزية مناسبة خلال المحادثة.						
26- أختلق كلمات جديدة إذا لم أكن أعرف						

	الكلمات الإنجليزية الصحيحة.					
	27- أقرأ الإنجليزية دون أن أكتب عن معنى كل كلمة من القاموس.					
	28- أحاول أن أتحزر ما سيقوله الطرف الآخر بالإنجليزية.					
	29- إذا لم أجد كلمة إنجليزية، أستعمل كلمة أو جملة أخرى تحمل نفس المعنى.					
	30- أحاول أن أجد طرقاً كثيرة من أجل أن أمارس لغتي الإنجليزية.					
	31- أحاول أن ألحظ أخطائي التي أرتكبها من أجل أن أحسن أدائي.					
	32- أصغي بانتباه عندما يتحدث شخص ما باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	33- أحاول أن أبحث عن طرق تساعدني أن أكون متعلماً أفضل للغة الإنجليزية.					
	34- أرتب جدولي بحيث يكون عندي وقت كافي لدراسة الإنجليزية.					
	35- أبحث عن أشخاص أستطيع أن أتحدث الإنجليزية معهم.					
	36- أبحث عن فرص من أجل أن أقرأ ما أستطيع باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	37- عندي أهداف واضحة من أجل تحسين مهاراتي بالإنجليزية.					
	38- أفكر بطرق تقدمي في تعلم الإنجليزية.					
	39- أحاول أن أسترخي عندما أشعر					

	بالخوف من استعمال الإنجليزية.					
	40- أشجع نفسي على التحدث بالإنجليزية حتى عندما أكون خائفاً من ارتكاب أخطاء.					
	41- أكافئ نفسي عندما يكون أدائي جيداً بالإنجليزية.					
	42- أستطيع معرفة الأوقات التي أكون فيها متوتراً وأنا أتعلم أو أستعمل الإنجليزية.					
	43- أدون أحاسيسي ومشاعري في مفكرة خاصة بتعلم الإنجليزية.					
	44- أتحدث مع الآخرين حول شعوري وأنا أتعلم الإنجليزية.					
	45- إذا لم أفهم شيئاً بالإنجليزية، أسأل المتحدث أن يبطئ أو أن يعيد.					
	46- أطلب من الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية أن يصححوني إذا ما أخطأت وأنا أتكلم الإنجليزية.					
	47- أمارس الإنجليزية مع زملائي الطلبة.					
	48- أطلب مساعدة من الناطقين بالإنجليزية عندما أحتاجها.					
	49- أطرح أسئلة بالإنجليزية بغرض التوضيح والتحري.					
	50- أحاول أن أتعلم عن ثقافة الناطقين بالإنجليزية.					
	51- لا ألجأ لاستعمال القاموس لمعرفة معاني الكلمات غير مألوفة.					
	52- أحفظ معاني الكلمات بدون سياق					

وأدرسها على شكل قائمة.						
53- أجيب بالإنجليزية إذا ما طرح علي سؤال بالإنجليزية.						
54- أحفظ قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية من أجل أن أطبقها في المحادثة والكتابة.						
55- أعطي لنفسي امتحانات ذاتية من أجل التحضير لامتحانات الإنجليزية.						
56- أتدرب بصمت على ما أريد قوله بالإنجليزية قبل أن أتكلم.						
57- أطلب من الآخرين أن يمتحنوني فيما حفظته بالإنجليزية.						
58- أحاول أن أفكر بالإنجليزية.						
59- أحفظ الكلمات الإنجليزية الجديدة عن طريق تصنيفها في مجموعات مثل مجموعة المترادفات، مجموعة المتضادات، الأسماء، الأفعال ...						
60- أكرر ما أقرأ أكثر من مرة حتى أحسن فهمي للإنجليزية.						