## English Language Learning, Strategy Use and Academic Performance of College Students

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# English Language Learning, Strategy Use and Academic Performance of College Students

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**Keywords:**
Education, English
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## A B S T R A C T

English language remains to be the dominant language use and acceptable globally. However, in school, language teachers observed that students have difficulty in learning this language. The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between English language learning and strategy use and academic performance of college students. It employed descriptive correlational design. Questionnaires in English Language Learning and Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) were used to gather the data. Results revealed that the levels of English language learning and strategy use were both rated as high. On the other hand, the academic performance in English 121 (Speech and Oral Communication) of the college students was developing. Furthermore, a significant relationship was found between academic performance and strategy use, but no relationship existed between academic performance and English language learning. It implied that students' use of strategies in learning the language would matter much about their English 121 grades. However, despite a high rating in their English language learning, it did not have any relationship with their academic performance. For educators, the result of the study could give a clear indication of the importance of helping students master the use of strategies in English language learning to maximize their skills and knowledge, and to improve their academic performance.

## Introduction

The use of English language continues to gain global acceptance in business, education and other sectors in society. English was a sort of unstoppable linguistic movement (Demon-Heinrich, 2005). Researchers found how this language is gaining prominence, and they even regarded it as a medium of communication of people across national borders (Crystal, 1997; Graddol, 2006; Jenkins, 2000; Kachru, 1992; McArthur, 1998; Smith, 1983; Widdowson, 1994). In fact, it was agreed to be the operational language of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Kirkpatrick, 2012). Acknowledging its value across the globe, English language learning, indeed, became a necessity. Thus, it should be highlighted in classroom instructions, along with strategy use, to help students become efficient communicators in whatever context they engage.

Known to be globally understood and accepted language, English would influence the social, cultural, political and educational aspects (Phillipson, 2004). And the rate of migration and immigration from countries to countries has a notable impact on the world. This phenomenon

was facilitated chiefly because of individuals' capacity to communicate using the same language. Tusda (1994) also described English as the language of science and technology, globalization, modernization, internationalization and transnationalism. Indeed, English was considered a vital medium of communication in the global arena.

The importance of language went beyond the letters. Many associated it with one's identity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008; Mantero, 2007). Likewise, scholars considered it as a revelation of a person's identity to the world. It is a "dimension of linguistic inquiry" (Omoniyi & White, 2006). Deep within a person's pride is his belongingness to a particular culture. However, expression of the richness of one's culture had often become more vivid when expressed in language. Hence, learning English is not learning a language in isolation but learning and understanding other culture as well.

English was unquestionably significant, yet, many studies revealed how challenging it was to learn this second language. As Tsui (1996) emphasized that when not properly received, English language could be a cause of failure, frustration, and low esteem. In fact, there were findings of the study which found English subject as the source of tension and social division between elite and the masses in Nigeria, Tanzania, and Kenya (Bamgbose, 2003; Bisong, 1995), South Africa (Kamwangamalu, 2007), India (Annamalai, 2005; Bhatt, 2005), Hong Kong (Li, 2002) and the Philippines (Tollefson, 2000). And, English language teachers all over the world had continually dealt with this scenario.

In academic milieu, proficiency in English was not exclusively beneficial for English subjects per se. There were studies which could correlate English language learning to the academic performance of students in other academic areas (Aina, Ogundele, & Olanipekun, 2013; Saquing-Guingab, 2015). In the study conducted by Aina, Ogundele, and Olanipekun (2013) it was revealed that those learners who were performing well in their English subjects were the ones who did better in their other subjects, particularly, in science and technology. Similarly, students' English language usage (ELU) was highly linked to their academic performance in other areas (Saquing-Guingab, 2015).

There had been attempts to study the different factors related to English language learning. For instance, a study examined motivation, anxiety, global awareness and linguistic confidence about language test performance. It was found that selected psychological factors were contributory to test performance (Zheng, 2010). Similarly, Thang et al. (2011) argued that if the students perceived the relevance of the academic area in the school, they had a positive attitude towards it. And, if they recognized the importance of the English subject, they had a motivation to learn about it. Likewise, other studies explored on the relationship between age and motivation (Julkunen & Borzova, 1997; Nikolov, 2000), motivation and sex differences (Carr & Pauwels, 2006; MacIntyre et al., 2003), demographic profile and motivation (Dörnyei, 1990; Gardner, 1988; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Warden &Lin, 2000) and motivation and language (Lukmani, 1972; Spolsky, 1969; Yamashiro & McLaughin, 2000). These studies provided explanations as to how students learn the language given the many factors which in one way or another affect their perception and performance. Furthermore, these studies suggested that if students had a positive attitude towards learning the language, then they would tend to have high academic achievement.

While there were studies that associated English language learning to academic performance, there were also others that could connect strategy use on students' learning of English (Alhaisoni, 2012;Chien, 2007; Liu, 2014; Xu, 2012). Learning strategy could refer to how one performed a given responsibility (Schumaker & Deshler, 2006), particularly, how an individual thought and acted when planning, executing and evaluating performance. Furthermore, strategies required individuals to decipher what could work best for a task (Alexander, Graham, & Harris, 1998). One factor that contributed to learners' use of strategy was his/her knowledge about its purpose.

And, such would be influenced by what and how it would be employed (Chinn, 2006).

In the Philippines, English language teachers were held responsible for the decline of "English standards" (Wilson, 2009). Specifically, Wilson (2009) considered the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) results of the Filipinos who were looking for jobs in other countries for 2008 alarming. It turned out that Malaysians got higher overall mean scores in English than Filipinos who were well-known for their ability in the English.

Not just Filipino learners articulated problems regarding English language learning. Even among Korean college students who studied here in the Philippines revealed that they had difficulty both in their English subject and in the actual use of this language while talking to Filipinos (de Guzman, et al., 2006). Similarly, foreign students enrolled in the Universities here in the country expressed that they also experienced apprehension in their English language learning (Lucas, Miraflores & Go, 2011). However, they were able to compensate for this negative feeling by employing a strategy enhancing their vocabulary.

In Cor Jesu College, language teachers observed that oral communication in English was a problem among students. When asked to recite in class, the majority would resort to language switching or language mixing. It implied lack of command of the English language. And, it could be a manifestation of "internal mental confusion" (Lipski, 1982, p.1). This observation was an affirmation of the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) result of the first-year students, last school year 2014–2015. The OLSAT result revealed that most of the students' rating in verbal and nonverbal competency ranged from average to disadvantaged.

Recognizing the merits of the previous findings and the desire to deepen understanding in this field, the researchers would investigate English language learning and strategy use in relation to the academic performance of the second-year students of Cor Jesu College (CJC). The conduct of this study would also serve as a way of knowing well the target respondents as English language learners. The more teachers become knowledgeable of their students, the better they could help them to learn. Furthermore, awareness of the students' efficient or inefficient use of strategies would make language teachers identify areas to highlight in their English classes. Moreover, there was no research study conducted yet which focused on English language learning, strategy use and academic performance of second-year CJC students.

## *Review of Related Literature*

This part contains different literatures and studies which would serve as the foundation of the study, particularly English language learning, strategy use and academic performance.

## *English Language Learning*

English became an international language for several reasons. As pointed out by Kachru and Nelson (2001), English is considered as universal language since those who are using it are not mainly native speakers but also those non-native speakers. Yilmaz and Ozkan (2016) supported this idea when they argued that the English language has continuously increased its role as an international language which eventually resulted to the varieties of English for both native and non-native English-speaking countries around the world.

The ideas above gave rise to the perception that there is a need to study this language and identify its features for one to use it effectively. Teachers perceived that students must

embrace the English language especially its diversities and they need to have intercultural awareness if they are to successfully engage in intercultural communication (Yilmaz & Ozkan, 2016). Likewise, several studies revealed students' perception of their lack of competence in English. They believed their incompetence in the language hampered them in participating actively in class and any academic interaction (Barker, Child, Gallois, Jones, & Callan, 1991; Robertson, Line, Jones, & Thomas, 2000).

## *Strategy Use*

Strategy use, as indicated by Oxford (1989) has six indicators, namely: cognitive, metacognitive, memory, compensation, affective and social. There are two types of cognitive strategies: general and specific (Pressley & Woloshyn, 1995). Learners apply general cognitive strategies across disciplines, like summarizing or setting goals to be accomplished. But, specific cognitive strategies focus on a kind of task, like drawing a picture to help one see how to tackle a problem in Physics. Metacognitive strategies have to do with management and monitor of learning (Schraw et al., 2006). They give awareness to the learners in the learning process and make them know when and what strategy to use in a task. Hence, they plan, monitor and evaluate in advance (Zhang & Goh, 2006). As regards memory related strategy aids, learners connect new concepts from second language (L2) to first language (L1), but with not so deep understanding of it. Memory strategy is used to retrieve information through acronyms, rhyming, images, total physical response and flashcards (Oxford, 2003). Compensatory strategy, on the other hand, is employed to solve problems when limited linguistic resources are provided (Fraerch & Kasper, 1983). Affect relates to emotions and feelings that an individual is enduring while learning which may influence his/her motivation (Doryen, 2001; Hurd, 2008). However, according to White (2008), this can be regulated through affective strategies (Oxford, 1990) by reducing anxiety, encouraging oneself and monitoring one's emotion. When one uses it successfully this can be beneficial to his/her learning (Benson, 2001). And, the social strategy is done through asking questions, getting verifications, having clarifications, asking help in doing language tasks and exploring cultural norms. In so doing, social strategy gives an avenue for learners to deal with others and gain an understanding of the target language (Oxford, 2003).

Generally, strategy use played a vital role in learning. Many researches were conducted to compare proficient and less proficient learners (Chan, Burtis, Scardamalia & Bureiter, 1992; Chi, Bassok, Lewis, Reiman & Glasier, 1989). These studies showed the level of difference of strategy use between novice and expert learners. Also, another set of studies revealed that students who employed new strategies were more likely to perform better than those who did not (Graham, MacArthur, & Schwartz, 1995). Likewise, in the study of Langer (2001), it was reported that higher-performing schools focused on strategy instruction than those low-performing schools; thus, helping students learn effective cognitive strategies. Indeed, the use of strategies had been proven to be effective.

In language classes, strategy use had also been proven valuable to contribute an increase in students' academic performance (Alhaisoni, 2012; Chien, 2007; Kirmizi, 2014; Liu, 2014). The study of Chien, (2007) in Taiwan linking rhetorical strategy use on students' writing in English revealed that there was a good effect on students' academic performance. Also, Liu (2014) pointed out that training students to employ strategies, especially, on the use of dictionaries made them become independent learners and helped them progress in their minor English subject. Similarly, English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners of Saudi who maximized the use of different strategies were found to have likely had high proficiency (Alhaisoni, 2012). Moreover, when more vocabulary learning strategy was employed by Turkish EFL learners, the higher their academic achievement and wider their vocabulary had become (Kirmizi, 2014). With these, strategy use indeed aid students to improve their academic performance.

## Academic Performance in English

Due to the increasing popularity of English language, schools around the world offered English as one of their course. Because of globalization, English gained its prestige as the international language (Wu, 2013). However, there were several claims about the difficulty of learning the language. Learning meant not only knowing words and uttering those in any form of communication. Learners had to consider its origin and its culture. As Yilmaz and Ozkan (2016) posited, learning a language necessitates learning the culture of its origin. Through this, students would be able to gain a critical understanding of their own culture and the culture of the second language they were learning. Furthermore, they would be able to compare values and beliefs of the two languages. Thus, to have a successful intercultural communication, intercultural awareness would be necessary (Korzilius, van Hoft & Planken, 2007).

When students would not successfully learn the features of English language, the difficulty of learning it would take place. In fact, several studies investigated on the challenges encountered by learners studying English as a second language. Studies revealed that problems were related to culture, academics, and pressures (Spencer-Oatey & Xiong, 2006). When students did not know how and when to use the language, then failure would likely occur. These difficulties were present because of lack of knowledge of the language (Wu, 2014). If one wanted to be competent in English, he/she should orient himself/herself to this language. Studies revealed that students' competence in English served as the basis for students to succeed academically (Barker, Child, Gallios, Jones & Callen, 1991; Church, 1982; Wintergerst, DeCapua& Verna, 2003; Ying & Liese, 1991). However, students' incompetence in English hampered them to perform well in their academic pursuits (Barker, Child, Gallois, Jones& Callan, 1991; Robertson, Line, Jones & Thomas, 2000).

## Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Krashen's (1977, 1981, 1982) monitor hypothesis. This hypothesis pointed out that checking oneself would be expected when one learned or acquired the language. Based on this theory, the researchers argued that strategy use, as shown in Oxford's (1989) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), came in when students applied their knowledge when speaking and writing, and when they adjusted in their output. And, this understanding emanated from their formal learning in language classes. Thus, when they came up with the desired output in the scholarly context, their academic performance also improved. There were likewise studies that could connect strategy use on students' learning of English (Chien, 2007; Liu, 2014; Kirmizi, 2014). Employing strategies, particularly on writing (Chien, 2007), on use of dictionaries (Liu, 2014), and on learning vocabulary (Kirmizi, 2014), significantly improved students' language learning, and made them become highly proficient in English.

## Conceptual Framework

This study would determine the influence of English language learning and strategy use on the academic performance of the second-year students. As shown in Figure 1 below, the first independent variable of the study was students' English language learning with three indicators, namely: reasons in learning English, feelings about English lessons and feelings about learning English. The second independent variable was strategy use, which has six indicators, namely: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social while the dependent variable was the academic performance of students based on their final grade in English 121. The researchers argued that students' English language learning and strategy use influence their academic performance.
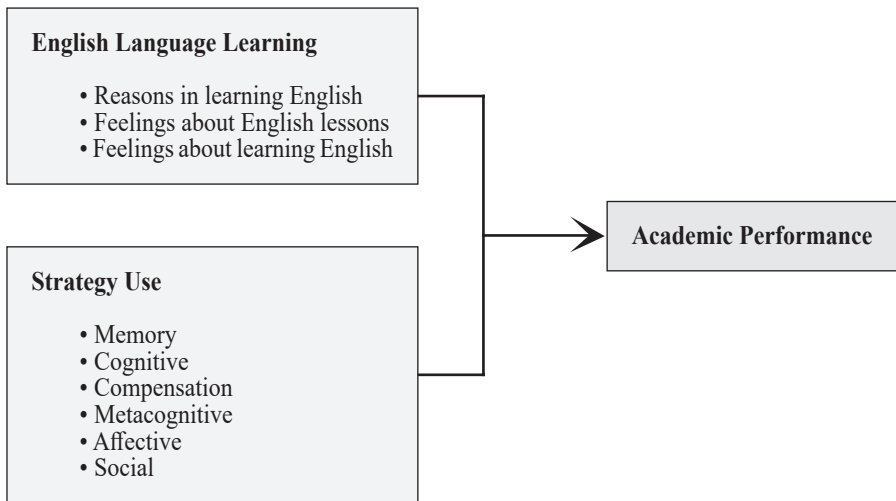
**English Language Learning**

- Reasons in learning English
- Feelings about English lessons
- Feelings about learning English

**Academic Performance**

**Strategy Use**

- Memory
- Cognitive
- Compensation
- Metacognitive
- Affective
- Social

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

## Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to investigate the English language learning, strategy use and academic performance of the second-year college students in Cor Jesu College, Digos City. Specifically, this study sought to determine the levels of English language learning, strategy use and academic performance of students. It also investigated if there exists a relationship between English language learning and strategy use and academic performance of the respondents.

## Method

This study employed descriptive correlational design. The researchers used the correlational design to see the influence of English language learning and strategy use to academic performance. As Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (1993) pointed out, correlational research had to do with the gathering of data with the purpose of finding out the level of relationship that exists between or among variables involved in the study. The respondents of the investigation were second-year students of Cor Jesu College, Digos City. The proponents of this study utilized two standardized questionnaires, specifically, Questionnaire about English Learning for English Language Learning and Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Rebecca Oxford (1989) for strategy use. Moreover, the researchers used the students' final grades in English 121 (Speech and Oral Communication) for academic performance. In identifying the respondents of the study, the researchers employed stratified random sampling. Permission from the dean of college and program heads of the different divisions was secured. After getting the approval, the investigators conducted a survey to the respondents. In analyzing the data, for the levels of language learning, strategy use and academic performance, mean score were used. In identifying the relationship between English language learning and strategy use and academic performance, Pearson-r Product Moment Correlation was employed.

## Results

This study presented its results in four parts, namely, English language learning, strategy use, academic performance of the second-year college students in Cor Jesu College and the relationship between English language learning and strategy use and academic performance of the respondents. A total number of 189 second-year college students participated in the study particularly Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT), Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA), Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (BSCE), Bachelor of Science in Electronics and Communications Engineering (BSECE), Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering (BSCPE) and Bachelor of Science in Accounting Technology (BSAT).

*Table 2. Level of English Language Learning*

|  | N | Mean | Std. Dev | Descriptive Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reasons in Language Learning | 188 | 4.32 | .508 | High |
| Feeling about English Lesson | 188 | 3.97 | .494 | High |
| Feeling about Learning English | 188 | 4.31 | .569 | High |
| Total | 188 | 4.20 | .524 | High |

Results of the investigation revealed that the levels of language learning among college students as measured in the three components were relatively high. As shown in Table 2, the reasons in language learning had a mean score of 4.32 almost the same with their feeling about learning English with 4.31 and feeling about their English lesson with 3.97. The standard deviation of each component falls within the +/- 1 standard deviation which showed that students' responses were generally concentrated near the mean scores of each factor.

*Table 3. Level of Strategy Use*

|  | N | Mean | Std. Dev | Descriptive Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Memory | 188 | 3.20 | .635 | Moderate |
| Cognitive | 188 | 3.65 | 2.268 | High |
| Compensation | 188 | 3.58 | .631 | High |
| Metacognition | 188 | 3.58 | .747 | High |
| Affective | 188 | 3.21 | .717 | Moderate |
| Social | 188 | 3.50 | .745 | High |
| Total | 188 | 3.45 | 0.865 | High |

On students' level of strategy use, the mean scores revealed relatively moderate and high. Students had the highest level of the use of cognitive strategy although the standard deviation showed dispersed responses of students indicating that many were using this strategy on the extremes of the Likert scale.

The cognitive strategy was then followed by compensation and metacognition strategies, then social strategy, affective and lastly memory strategy. All strategies except the cognitive were concentrated near the mean score with standard deviations less than +/- 1 indicating that students' responses were similar.

Table 4. Level of Academic Performance in English 121

| Course | Mean | % Equivalent | N | Std. Dev | Descriptive Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BSBA | 2.29 | 75–79% | 28 | .402 | Developing |
| BSIT/BSCS | 2.40 | 75–79% | 28 | .506 | Developing |
| BSA | 1.52 | 85–89% | 31 | .240 | Proficient |
| BSCE/ECE/CPE | 2.36 | 75–79% | 46 | .500 | Developing |
| BSAT | 2.24 | 75–79% | 56 | .997 | Developing |
| Total | 2.18 | 75–79% | 189 | .714 | Developing |

Table 4 showed the final grades of the respondents in their English 121 course during the first semester of S.Y 2015–2016. The grades were interpreted using the school's grade equivalence used by the entire college department. It observed 1.0 as the highest grade, 3.0 as the lowest passing grade and 5.0 as the failing grade, based on the 60% passing grade. Table 4 illustrated the mean scores and percentage equivalent of the students in the five programs using the K-12 program standard assessment. The students with the highest grades were those coming from the BS Accountancy program with a proficient academic performance followed by those in the BS Accounting Technology, then those from the BS Business Administration, next from the BS Civil, Electronics and Computer Engineering and lastly from the BS Information Technology and Computer Studies. The standard deviation of each program showed a relatively concentrated response near the mean score as it fell within the +/-1 SD range.

*Table 5. The relationship between Strategy Use and English Language Learning and Academic Performance.*

| | | Strategy Use | English Language Learning | Grades |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| English 121 Grades | Pearson Correlation | .204** | .096 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .005 | .196 | |
| | N | 187 | 184 | 188 |

In determining if significant relationship existed between academic performance and strategy use and English language learning, Pearson-r Product Moment Correlation was employed. Table 5 showed an r-value of .204 which revealed a significant relationship between academic performance and strategy use. Hence, the researchers rejected the null hypothesis. This was supported by the p-value of .005 which was lower than the 0.05 level of significance. It meant that the performance of the students in English 121 was positively related to their strategy use.

On the other hand, no significant difference was found between academic performance and English language learning as shown in Table 5 with an r-value of .096 and p-value of .196 which was higher than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the researchers accepted the null hypothesis.

Table 6. Correlation between Academic Performance and Strategy Use

| | | Grades | Memory | Cognitive | Compen-sation | Meta-cognition | Affective | Social |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grades | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .050 | .098 | .233** | .301** | .039 | .176* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .494 | .184 | .001 | .000 | .598 | .016 |
| | N | 188 | 187 | 187 | 187 | 187 | 187 | 187 |

Since relationship was significant, further analysis was done to include the six components of strategy use and their relationship towards academic performance. Table 6 revealed that only three components had shown a significant relationship to academic performance. These were compensation with a value of .233, metacognition with .301, and social with .176. These were supported by the p-values of .001, .000 and .016 respectively. Hence, the proponents rejected the null hypothesis. It suggested that among the six components of strategy use, only these three had a positive relationship with academic performance while memory, cognitive and affective did not show statistical result proving their significant relationship with academic performance. With r-values of .050, .098, and .039 and p-values of .498, .184, and .598 respectively, the null hypothesis was accepted. With these results, the researchers hypothesized that these three strategies did not matter to the performance of the students in English 121.

## Discussion

Investigating on students' English language learning, strategy use and academic performance could be essential for both teachers and learners. The results of the study could help teachers design effective strategies for their language classes. Likewise, this investigation could heighten students' awareness vis-à-vis these variables. Hence, they would know what areas to improve as second language learners.

As to English language learning, results showed that respondents always thought of essential reasons why they had to learn English (Table 1). They perceived that learning English could be their gateway to an improved academic standing not just in the English subject per se but to other academic areas as well. The studies of Ogundele and Olanipekun (2013) and Saquing-Guingab (2015) affirmed it. They revealed that high performing learners in their English subjects were also those who achieved better in their other subjects specifically, in science and technology (Ogundele & Olanipekun, 2013). Likewise, students' English language usage (ELU) highly linked with their academic performance in other areas (Saquing-Guingab, 2015). Moreover, respondents also believed that they had to learn English because it would be their access for better opportunities in life like making friends and dealing with other people from different countries, appreciating more of the literary pieces, entering their preferred universities, studying abroad, and landing a high paying job. In fact, research revealed that immigrants were more likely to handle hazardous tasks in the workplace than English native speakers because of inferiority in their command of this language and academic achievement (Orrenius & Zavodny, 2009).

Aside from those important reasons in learning the second language, the findings showed that respondents had a positive feeling about their English lessons and about learning

English. They enjoyed lessons and activities given in this subject especially if these involved pronunciation, games, and songs. Porto (2007) stressed out the value of learners' assessment of own thoughts and feelings which served as the key to their independence in language learning milieus. Besides, he emphasized teachers' role in finding out the learners' thoughts and beliefs because these influenced their participation in language activities (Porto, 2007). Respondents were happy and satisfied towards learning the second language as a consequence of their appreciation of its use within and beyond the four corners of the classroom.

About strategy use, students had the highest level of cognitive strategy. It implied that the following were always true to the student-respondents: saying or writing new words several times and writing notes, messages, and reports in English, practicing the sounds and using the words of the second language in different ways, watching TV shows spoken in English and making summaries of information heard or read in this language. Abbas and Baharestani (2014) presented similar findings on strategy use wherein cognitive strategies were mainly employed by Iranian EFL (English as Foreign Language) learners. However, as Escribe and Huet (2005) suggested that upholding cognitive strategy entailed goals to be well-matched with the task needs.

The cognitive strategy was then followed by compensation and metacognition strategies, then social strategy, affective and lastly by memory strategy. These results revealed that making guesses to understand unfamiliar words, presuming what other speakers will say next, using gestures during conversation or other related words instead of unknown words and reading without looking up for every word were almost always true of the students. These compensation strategies were found to be valuable by both high and low performing learners to recompense for their insufficient know-how in the target language and to consistently push them to continue writing (Cabrejas-Peñuelas, 2012). Also, both of the above-mentioned similar groups of learners in Iran, frequently employed these compensation strategies than the others (Khosravi, 2012). Furthermore, respondents were conscious on how they learn and think which implied their use of metacognitive strategies. In a study by Schleifer and Dull (2009), they correlated metacognitive traits of students with their success in accounting classes. It also showed that respondents often employed social strategies in language learning. Thus, they practiced and learned English through their dealings with people around them. In fact, it pointed out that for superior emotional intelligence (EI), more use of social and affective strategies was needed (Rastegar & Karami, 2013).

The student-respondents moderately used affective and memory strategies. It meant that these affective strategies such as awareness of their feelings, relaxing whenever there was tension, sharing with others what they felt while learning and encouraging themselves to speak in English despite the fear of making mistakes were somewhat evident to them. Like social strategies, emotional intelligence and affective strategies also have positive relationship (Rastegar & Karami, 2013). Lastly, memory strategies in the forms of thinking link between what they knew and new things they learned, using new words, rhymes and flashcards, and connecting sounds of new words and image for fast recall of those words, were also true to them about half the time. And, as highlighted by Pérez Sánchez, and Beltrán Llera (2007) teachers have roles to play to help improve the memory of students. They further stressed out the use of technology to attain such. Another study on strategy use among female English major students in one university in Qatar obtained almost similar results (Riazi, 2007). From the most to least employed strategies were: metacognitive, cognitive, compensation, social, memory, and affective.

Concerning academic performance, students from different courses such as BSBA, BSIT, BSCE, and BSAT were rated developing in English 121. This finding revealed that students at this level of proficiency had only possessed the minimum knowledge, skills and core understanding. Therefore, they needed help throughout the performance of authentic tasks. On the contrary, BSA

students were proficient which meant that they had developed the fundamental knowledge and skills and understanding and could transfer them independently through authentic performance tasks. In the framework of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), vocabulary learning was found to forecast Academic English Proficiency (AEP) of the learners in writing (Roche & Harrington, 2013). While Chermahini, Ghanbari and Talab's (2013) investigation showed that learning styles could foretell students' educational achievement in English.

Moreover, the investigation revealed that students' strategy use particularly compensation, metacognition, and social strategies had a significant relationship with their academic performance in English 121. This finding corroborated Krashen's monitor hypothesis. Students acquisition and application of communication strategies were reflected in their academic performance. Several researches supported it since they found out that learners' use of strategies could be associated with their progress in English (Alhaisoni, 2012; Chien, 2007; Liu, 2014; Xu, 2012). Moreover, there were studies which concluded that learners who applied new strategies were those who likely performed well (Graham, MacArthur, & Schwartz, 1995). Also, strategies, particularly on instruction, had been found to have a higher impact on Korean students' academic achievement in their language classes (Joo, Seo, Joung, & Lee, 2012).

This study further posited that English language learning had nothing to do with the students' academic performance in English 121. The low (developing) performance of students in their English subject could be the reason for the lack of significant relationship between these two variables. However, teachers must do something. They should exert much effort to help improve the performance of the students. This finding could negate Saquing-Guingab's (2015) study which highly correlated students' usage of the English language to their academic performance. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, and Páez, (2008), it was revealed that students' dissimilarity in their level of aptitude in the English language partly associate with their distinct personalities or traits.

## Conclusion

Findings revealed that all components of students' English language learning were relatively high. Hence, it showed that students were aware of how they think and feel about English language learning. Being conscious of the reasons why they had to learn English was a plus factor for them since it could make their involvement in their language classes worthwhile. However, their English language learning has nothing to do with their academic performance in English 121 (Speech and Oral Communication). Unfortunately, students from these different courses namely: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), Bachelor of Science in Information and Technology (BSIT), Bachelor of Science in Accounting Technology (BSAT) and Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (BSCE) were ranked as developing in their academic performance in English 121. It further implied that students merely acquired minimum knowledge and skills in the subject. Therefore, they needed full support from their teachers throughout the accomplishment of tasks. Furthermore, researchers found out that in their strategy use, students were relatively moderate and high. Moreover, their performance in English 121 was positively related to their use of strategies, particularly, compensation, metacognition, and social.

For educators, the result of the study could give a clear indication of the importance of helping students master the use of strategies in English language learning to maximize their skills and knowledge, and to improve their academic performance.

## Recommendation

Based on the results of this study, the researchers recommended the following: English language teachers must focus on low performing students since their progress could be mainly dependent on the assistance extended to them. Moreover, they can device efficient strategies to help improve the academic performance of the students in English 121. This investigation proved that strategy use had a significant relationship on academic performance; therefore, teachers can highlight various strategies which students can readily employ in different communicative milieus. They can train learners to use compensation strategies which will help them independently manage language learning difficulties and avoid lapses in communication. Also, teachers must encourage learners to utilize metacognitive strategies which can heighten their awareness on how they can learn best and make them monitor their progress. Also, they can give activities which will allow learners to interact with one another using the English language and capitalize on their social strategies. Lastly, school administrators might as well consider the strict implementation of the "English Speaking Policy" in the different offices inside the school campus so that learners have more opportunities to practice the use of the target language.

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