

## **LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT IN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Indonesian students' average English proficiency is declining. The decline in English skills among Indonesian students is due to students' learning difficulties. Appropriate English language learning strategies (LLS) can improve students' academic performance. This study aims to find out the students' dominant LLS, then the students' learning achievement, and find out the distribution of students' LLS in the student's achievement. This study uses a quantitative method with a survey approach. The population of this study was tenth-grade students of SMK PGRI 1 Kota Kediri. The instruments used in this study were questionnaires and tests. The data show differences in the use of language learning strategies among students. From the data, it demonstrates that vocational high school students dominantly use social strategy as language learning strategy. Students who achieved perfect category grades mainly used metacognitive and social strategies.

Keywords: English achievement, language learning strategies, learning difficulties, survey, vocational high school

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesian average English proficiency is declining. According to the English Proficiency Index (EPI) reported by English First (EF), Indonesia ranked 80th out of 112 countries. It is down six places from last year (English First, 2021). Based on this data, the decline may lead to lower student achievement in learning English.

The decline in English skills among Indonesian students is due to learning difficulties. However, there are still many issues that students have to deal with when practicing English learning in Indonesia. According to Tambunsaribu (2021) there are three categories of reasons for students' learning difficulties: first, students think that English is confusing, students do not like English learning, and students assume that English is not necessary to them. According to Degissew (2022), students have low scores of learning difficulty in the learning process, indicating a

negative correlation between learning difficulty and student performance. However, students with lower scores may have learning difficulties that students cannot identify.

Appropriate English language learning strategies (LLS) can improve students' academic performance. According to Oxford (2017) giving LLS to students in order to improving academic performance especially in English. Student need tool that it can engaging student, giving purposeful efforts, so students can control their learning progress. It also contributes to the effectiveness of students and teachers in helping improve English learning skills in the teaching and learning process (Hariri, 2020; Yustitiasari, 2020). Another study proves a positive correlation between LLS and students' writing performance (Nurdianingsih, 2018). This is also consistent with the (R.L Oxford, 1990). "One factor influencing student success is the student's use of language learning strategies."

Numerous studies on LLS and English achievement correlate these two variables. Although at a moderate level. A significant correlation exists between LLS and high school students' achievement (Nurdianingsih, 2018; QOMARIAH, 2018; Sukarni, 2019; Wati, 2019). Additionally, another study shows the differences in LLS between high-achieving and low-achieving students (Amjusfa, 2021). At the university level, using LLS is helpful for university students. The more language learning strategies students use, the better their English skills will be (Hayati & Usman, 2021).

In vocational education, the need for appropriate strategies for learning English is strongly felt. This includes helping professional students master the English language and preparing students to enter the professional world immediately. In this case, it is necessary to note that vocational high school graduates are one of the categories of workers that determine the direction of the demographic (Lee, 2017; Safira & Azzahra, 2022).

However, there is still a gap in the studies conducted by previous researchers regarding the lack of research on the use of LLS toward students' achievement at the vocational high school level. Most studies have investigated research topics for high school students, and there is a lack of information regarding LLS for vocational

high school students. This study considers the use of LLS and how the distribution of students' LLS influences students' achievement. The purpose of this study is to find out the students' dominant LLS, then to find out the students' learning achievement, and then, by knowing these two things, to find out the distribution of students' LLS in the students' achievement.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a quantitative method with a survey approach (Lodico, 2006). A survey approach was used to investigate and collect data on students' language learning strategies and identify the outcomes of students' performance in English subjects. Then, the researcher summarizes these descriptions as the proportion of people who reported each answer.

The population of this study was 185 students of tenth-grade students of SMK PGRI 1 Kota Kediri. The researcher conducted the research at SMK PGRI 1 Kota Kediri because it is a center of competence school. The Centre of Competence School aims to be a school of reference and a focal point for improving students. The researcher then used random sampling for their sample (Sugiyono, 2013). The researcher obtained 37 samples for analysis as these samples completed the research instrument provided by the researcher.

The instruments used in this study were questionnaires and tests. The questionnaire was adapted from (R.L Oxford, 1990) Strategy Inventory Language Learning (SILL) version 7. To determine the student's achievement, the researcher used a test adapted from the book *Simulai Try Out Untuk Kalangan SMK*, published by Erlangga. The SILL questionnaire and students' achievement test were then distributed, and each instrument consisted of 50 questions. In the data analysis, the data that the researcher has obtained then were analysed using the following formula:

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Which,

$\bar{X}$  : Mean Score

$\sum X$  : The total score of each part

$N$  : The total item question of each part

The above formula is the formula for calculating and determining the students' dominance in using language learning strategies. After the researcher knew how often the dominant use of language learning strategy was, the researcher converted the data into percentages. To calculate a student's achievement, the researcher uses the following formula:

$$X = N \times 2$$

Which,

$X$  : Students' score

$N$  : Total correct answer of students

$2$  : The integrity score

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The data show differences in the use of language learning strategies among students. The mean score for language learning strategy use was 2.62, which indicates that students used language learning strategy at medium level, which means students sometimes used language learning strategy. The data also show that students use all language learning strategies: metacognitive, social, compensatory, cognitive, memory, and affective.

Table 1  
The Percentage of Student Frequency Students Used LLS

<b>Types of LLS</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Memory	2.57	9	24.3%
Cognitive	2.46	2	5.4%
Compensation	2.55	5	13.5%
Metacognitive	2.78	8	21.6%
Affective	2.47	3	8.1%
Social	2.59	10	27.0%
<b>TOTAL &amp; AVERAGE</b>	2.62	37	100%

Table 1 shows that 10 out of 37 (27%) students mainly use social strategies (M=2.59). This was followed by memory strategies (M = 2.57), with 9 of her 37 students (24.3%) primarily using this strategy. For metacognitive strategies, 8 out of 37 students (21.6%) primarily used metacognitive strategies. Fourth, compensation (M=2.55) 5 out of 37 students (13.5%) used compensation strategies. Fifth, 3 out of 37 students (8.1%) primarily used affective strategies (M=8.1%). Cognitive strategies are the least used strategies by these students. Regarding cognitive strategies (M=2.46), 2 out of 37 (5.4%) primarily use cognitive strategies.

The above data results show that studies have shown that students are more likely to use compensation and metacognitive learning strategies (Degissew & Beriso, 2022; Yustitiasari et al., 2020). The other study also revealed that students used metacognitive as their dominant strategy (Andini & Prasetyowati, 2021). The second data is students' achievement. From the data, the highest score obtained by a student was 100, the lowest score was 16, and the overall average score was 46.48.

Table 2.  
Students' Achievement

<b>Score Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Excellent	2
Good	3
Fairly Good	7
Poor	25
<b>AVERAGE</b>	46.48

From the table 2, the ratings are divided into four categories. Category A is perfect in the score range (86-100). He has two students in this category. Next, Category B is good, with a score range of 71-85. She has three students in this category. Third, a category C in the score range (61-70) is fairly good. There are seven students in this category. Finally, Category D is low, with a score range of 0-60. There are 25 students in this category. Students' average achievement is classified as poor.

Table 3.

The percentage distribution of LLS and students' achievement

LLS	Percentage of Students Score			
	Poor	Fairly Good	Good	Excellent
Memory	21.62%	2.7%	0%	0%
Cognitive	5.4%	0%	0%	0%
Compensation	13.51%	0%	0%	0%
Metacognitive	5.4%	10.81%	2.7%	2.7%
Affective	5.4%	2.7%	0%	0%
Social	16.21%	2.7%	5.4%	2.7%
<b>M = 2.62</b>	<b>M = 46.48</b>			

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that students who achieved perfect category grades mainly use metacognitive and social strategies. Second, the excellent category is dominated by students who primarily use social learning strategies. Moreover, students who mainly use metacognitive strategies have sufficient average scores. Students who primarily use memory learning strategies dominate the less dominant category.

**Discussion**

Based on the finding, it shows that students primarily using compensation strategies tend not to fall into the perfect categories. Similarly, none of the students who primarily use memory learning strategies fall into the perfect category. This is consistent with the following studies that conducted by Amjusfa (2021) which found differences in language learning strategies between high and low-scoring

students. Also, data from the study (Hayati & Usman, 2021) shows that the better students use learning strategies, the higher their learning success scores. This study shows that students use fewer learning strategies, so their performance scores are also lower.

## CONCLUSION

According to the conducted research, vocational students mainly use metacognitive learning strategies. However, it is still very rare for students to use work-related learning strategies. Additionally, this study shows that vocational high school students' average academic performance ratings are very low. This study also shows that the less frequently language learning strategies are used, the greater their impact is on students' academic performance scores, and the use of learning strategies also influences professional students' academic performance scores.

Given the limitations of this study's population scope and sampling method, a larger, more representative research using additional methods may be required. Additionally, the results of this study have implications for training needs for developing metacognitive learning strategies that help improve student quality. These implications can serve as a guide to other professional schools.

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