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Option: Language and Communication

The Influence of Culture on EFL Students' Learning Strategies. The
Case of Master II Students Language and Communication, Department
of English, UMMTO

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Dedication

*To our beloved families and to all
those we love*

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Abstract

The present study which deals with Language Learning Strategies in relation to learner's socio-cultural background, aims at examining the use of language learning strategies (LLSs) by Master II students Language and Communication of the department of English at MMUTO. Additionally and essentially, the study aims to examine whether the socio-cultural background of the learner influences language learning strategies use. To conduct this study we adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection and data analysis. Thus, 45 Master II students participated in responding to the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which reflects the frequency of LLS types as used by the students. Interviews were also conducted with 14 students among those who responded to the SILL in order to relate and to discover whether the strategy choice of the students is influenced by their socio-cultural background. The data are analyzed following the SPSS method of analysis and the qualitative content analysis respectively. The analytical frameworks are Oxford LLS theory, and Vygotsky's SCT theory. The results show a strong tendency towards metacognitive, cognitive and social strategies, where metacognitive strategies are the most used. The least used strategies are compensation, memory and affective strategies. Furthermore, the results gathered from the qualitative data, that is, the interview confirmed that the socio-cultural background of the students of the department of English influences them when selecting their language learning strategies.

Key Words: Language learning strategies, Socio-cultural influence, Strategy frequency, Case study.

List of Abbreviations

- EFL: English as a Foreign Language
- ELT: English Language Teaching
- ESL: English as a Second Language
- IAR: Instructional Assessment Resources
- LASSI: Learning and Study Strategy Survey Inventory
- LLS: Language Learning Strategies
- SCT: Socio-Cultural Theory
- SILL: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning
- SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences
- MMUTO: Mouloud Mameri University of TiziOuzou

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Statement of the problem

The field of Language Learning Strategies is brought to wide interest thanks to the publication of Joan Rubin's article 'What the Good Language Learner can teach us' (1975). For the last decades, considerable researches in the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning, have changed the perspective from pure focus on methods of teaching to the learner's characteristics (Griffiths, 2013). The way learners process new information, learn, remember, and the kind of strategies they use to manage all these become widely investigated by researchers in the field of foreign language learning. Wenden 1985 (cited in Griffiths, 2004) describes the importance of Language Learning Strategies (henceforth LLS) by comparing it to the meaning of the following proverb 'Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime'. It is admitted that it is important for learners to use strategies in order to be successful learners (Griffiths, 2004).

As coined first by Rubin (1975), LLS are admitted by a wide range of researchers to be a challenging notion to describe or define. However, it is largely agreed that language learning strategies are an extremely powerful tool (O'Malley, Chamot, Stawner, Manzanares, Kupper, and Russo. 1985; cited in Griffiths, 2004) within the learning process. Since the mid-seventies, a growing attention is paid to the importance and usefulness of LLS used by the learner during the learning process "*learning begins with the learner*" (Nyikos, Oxford. 1993). Rubin (1975) defines the LLS as the techniques or devices a learner makes use of in order to learn a second or a foreign language. And according to Oxford (1990), LLS are specific actions that a learner uses to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, and more effective. In other words, LLS are what the learner does consciously in order to learn a second or a foreign language by making the process of learning simpler and effective. Indeed,

Cohen 1998 (cited in Griffiths, 2008) suggests that it is consciousness that distinguishes strategies from other processes which are not strategic.

Many factors affect the choice and the use of learning strategies such as gender, language proficiency, motivation, culture...etc. Indeed, the cultural factor, on which the present study is based, plays an important role in LLS choice.

Today, educators find their classrooms composed of students from different cultures (Joy, Kolb. 2009), and it is observed that this diversity of cultures among students is influential during the learning process. Variations in cultural, ethnic and national characteristics among learners affect their choice in opting for LLS.

In addition, Naiman et al. (1978) noticed that some learners are more successful than others during the learning of a second or a foreign language despite their exposure to the same teaching methods and learning environment. Indeed, this fact is admitted to be due to the use of language learning strategies that are mostly influenced by various factors mainly the socio-cultural background of the learner.

The role that LLS play in the learning of a second or a foreign language makes this study an important one, and the way in which the socio-cultural background of the learner influences the choice of a given LLS over others is worth investigating.

The investigation in the field of LLS is not a new one. Many researches have been conducted to clarify more this notion in general and to find out the relationship between LLS and the socio-cultural background of the learner in particular. Researchers all over the world investigated the influence of the socio-cultural aspects over LLS in different contexts. Selma Deneme at Trakya University, Turkey, presented a work in 2010 in which she compared the language learning strategy choice of students from three different cultural backgrounds: Jordanian, Spanish, and Turkish university students studying English as a foreign language in their native countries. She investigated the differences in LLS choice and the cultural reasons

behind the use of these strategies. These differences and preferences were apparently shaped and influenced by learners' ways of learning in their native languages and their socio-cultural backgrounds. Second, another research of this kind has been conducted by a group of researchers, Indika Liyanage, Peter Grimbeek, and Fiona Bryer in 2010 in Griffith University, Australia. In their work, they examined the role of ethnicity and religion in determining the language learning strategies of Sri Lankan and Japanese ESL students. They found out that religion and ethnic identity was associated with the use of metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies. More recently, a similar research is conducted by Jeffery Wallace Judge in Walden University in 2011. He explored the specific use of LLS by Spanish adults in a business communication context where he addressed the cultural influences on LLS. He reached the conclusion that the Spanish students tend to use mostly metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategies, and more scarcely the compensation, affective, and memory strategies the least.

All these researches have investigated the influence of the cultural background of the learner over LLS. They have succeeded to give evidence that indeed culture influences LLS use. They found that learners' strategies are affected by their cultural background and LLS vary according to cultural variations.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Various works have been devoted to examine the influence of the socio-cultural background of the learner on the choice of language learning strategies elsewhere. However, little attention is paid to LLS choice of learners within the same cultural background at national level. Hence, the present research intends to work out the present issue which consists in examining the impact that the socio-cultural background of the learner has on LLS use. In an attempt to provide an answer, the study will make use of two different theoretical

frameworks namely Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory (henceforth SCT) and Oxford's theory of LLS, to examine the mentioned notions above.

The attempt to work out the issue raises the following questions:

- What are the learning strategies that are mostly used by Master II students?
- Is students' choice of learning strategies affected by their socio-cultural background?

In an attempt to answer these questions, the following hypotheses are advanced:

- Master II students use mostly the cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies.
- Students' choice of learning strategies is affected by their socio-cultural background.
- Students' choice of learning strategies is not affected by their socio-cultural background.

Aims and Significance of the study

This study aims at determining the strategies that are frequently used by Master II students, trying to find out whether their socio-cultural background influences strategy choice. Whether learners manifest this socio-cultural influence in their strategy use and it will also try to determine the cultural reasons behind opting for certain types of strategies over others or not, is the subject matter of the research. Learners studying a second or a foreign language are in need of strategies that make the process of learning easier and effective, and the socio-cultural background influencing learners' strategy choice during the process of learning is worth investigating since no study has been conducted in this field to clarify this relationship at local level (Mouloud Mameri University Tizi Ouzou).

Research Techniques and Methodology

The present research makes use of two theoretical frameworks that is to say Oxford's LLS theory and Vygotsky's SCT. The first one will determine the learning strategies that are the most used by students since they are a useful tool for active, conscious, autonomous, and purposeful learning (Oxford. 2003, cited in Hurd and Lewis: 2008). Then, the second one

will serve to show that culture impacts considerably on the learning process (Joy and Kolb, 2009).

These theoretical frameworks are used to analyze the language learning strategies as used by the students of the department of English MMUTO. The research deals with linguistic option master II students. The sample is selected randomly; regardless of students' age or gender. The present research will rely on two research instruments namely the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) and a structured interview in order to collect data. The SILL questionnaire is used because of its appropriateness to assess LLS and because it is argued to be reliable and widely used all over the world (Oxford, 1999). It helps rating strategy frequency as used by foreign language learners. The structured interview will stress the socio-cultural side of the learner in order to sort out the cultural profile of the chosen sample and try to provide answers to strategy frequency among learners in terms of their socio-cultural background. The interview is used for its usefulness in making meaning of the situations (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995, cited in Marvasti, 2004). The interview relies on the work of Joy and Kolb in exploring the influence of culture on the learning styles and strategies (Joy and Kolb, 2009).

The data gathered with the SILL are analyzed with SPSS 20.0 which is a computer program used to treat social sciences statistics, and content analysis is used to record the use of some content like words or sentence underlying a specific purpose for the analysis of the interview. We consider that these research tools are appropriate to conduct this research and obtain the suitable data that fit the subject matter of the study.

Structure of the Dissertation

The present work is designed following the traditional simple type of dissertation form that is composed of introduction, review of the literature, methodology, results,

discussion, and conclusion. First, the introduction presents the topic of the research in general and states the problem by indicating the gap. As it provides an outline for the reader about how the work will be organized. Second, the literature review presents the different key terms that will be used within the research as defined by different scholars. Third, the methodology section gives the opportunity to state the theoretical framework and the different research tools, in other words the methods and methodology. Fourth, the results section is concerned with the outputs reached after collecting and analyzing the data. After that, the discussion section gives the opportunity to discuss and interpret the findings. Finally, the conclusion is where the important points of the research are summarized, and where further investigation is suggested to expand the scope of the study.

Chapter One

Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter reviews the main concepts and terminology related to Language Learning Strategies and the influence of the Socio-cultural Background of the learner on LLS choice. The aim of this literature review is to explore and describe the relationship between LLS and the socio-cultural factors influencing them. It advances the theoretical conceptions that will serve as scientific evidences to back up the present analysis, mainly the influence of culture on LLS. This chapter starts by setting up the scope of the study and by considering the different definitions of strategy and language learning strategies. Also, it explains the theoretical frameworks to be used. Moreover, it stresses the relationship between LLS and the socio-cultural background of the learner. Thus, it accounts for different views of scholars in the field of linguistics and applied linguistics.

1.1. The sociocultural background

The sociocultural background which combines society and culture, is an influential factor that shapes cognition. Individual's identity and personality are shaped by the components of the sociocultural background, that is to say social customs, values, beliefs, language... “ *sociocultural approaches emphasizes the interdependence of social and individual processes in the construction of knowledge*” (Steiner and Mahn, 191: 1996).

The sociocultural background plays an important role in individual's ways of learning in general, and affect students' choice of language learning strategies in particular. The present work stresses the sociocultural background of the berber society which is regarded as an oral society and based mainly on rural life, where the members of the village construct a specific

lifestyle based on sharity. The Kabyle people have the tendency to stick to traditions and customs.

1.2. Learning strategies

1.2.1. Second language acquisition/Second language learning

The result of language acquisition ... is subconscious. We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a 'feel' for the correctness. Grammatical sentences 'sound' right, or 'feel' right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated.

Language acquisition is regarded as an unconscious process in which the learner acquires a second language almost in the same way a child acquires his/her first language (mother tongue). The learner focuses most on the messages that his/her utterances comprise, not the form (Krashen, 1981: 1). Thus, acquisition demands meaningful interactions in the target language in which the learner focuses on meaning rather than on form. When a new language is acquired, the learner is not even aware of the process nor about the possession of a new knowledge. According to Krashen, both adults and children acquire language, written or oral, unconsciously. It is viewed that this process is identical to the process children undergo when acquiring their mother tongue. Hence, in order to refer to the conscious process of second language learning which serves best the current study, Krashen (1982: 10) states:

We will use the term 'learning' henceforth to refer to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In nontechnical terms, learning is 'knowing about' a language, known to most people as 'grammar' or 'rules'. Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language or explicit meaning.

Krashen postulates that the conscious process in which a learner acquires a second language is no more *acquisition* but *learning*. Just like what a learner experiences in school. New knowledge and language forms are represented clearly and consciously in the learner's mind. They are represented in the form of language rules. Language learning process occurs in terms of formal instructions and according to Krashen (1982: 10), it is less effective than language acquisition. Consciousness is what distinguishes acquisition from learning. Then, consciousness is concerned with the knowledge about language and the use of language at the same time. Learners achieve a specific level in linguistic competences with both processes.

For more effective and successful learning, the learner uses some techniques and undertakes some actions that back up his/her learning and make it easier and more enjoyable. These techniques and actions are called Language Learning Strategies.

1.2.2. Theoretical assumptions behind LLS

Griffiths places the learner at the heart of the learning process and considers responsibility and autonomy as essential factors in learning a new language from the cognitive aspect. Following this assertion, she advocates that strategies are learnable and teachable. According to Griffiths and Parr (2001), there are two theoretical perspectives behind language learning strategies.

1.2.3. Language learning as a cognitive process

Griffiths stresses the importance of LLS, saying that although teachers and many other people around learners may be of a great help and make learning easier and enjoyable, in the end it is up to the learner to do his/her learning. Helpful, suitable, and appropriate strategies will definitely make the learner achieve his/her goals with sufficient efforts and determination (Griffiths, 2013). For McLaughlin (1978) as cited in Griffiths (2001: 249), LLS is primarily a cognitive process:

LLS theory postulates that, other things being equal, at least part of this differential success rate is attributable to the varying strategies which different learners bring to the task. From this perspective, which views students as being able to consciously influence their own learning, the learning of language becomes a cognitive process, similar in many ways to any other kind of learning.(2001: 249)

Success in language acquisition is mainly due to the different strategies learners make use of. Learners are capable of consciously affecting their learning by their cognitive faculty to acquire a second or a foreign language just like they do in any other kind of learning. The learner is regarded as ‘an active participant in the learning process’ (Williams & Burden, 1997), and in order to be an active and effective learner, s/he must choose consciously the appropriate learning strategies that suit her/his goals and objectives. McLaughlin assumes that language learning is a cognitive process just like any other subject of study. For him, foreign language is not totally acquired through natural communication as suggested by Krashen (1976, 1977), rather it is also learnt consciously in terms of the development of language learning.

1.2.4. Learning strategies can be learnt

Many books such as Ellis and Sinclair (1989), and Brown (1991), help the learner to become more successful and effective during his/her learning process (Griffiths, 2008). However, it is assumed that learners can support their learning simply by imitating their successful peers’ strategies, as stated by Griffiths and Parr 2001 (cited in ELT Journal, 55 (3), p. 249) “*that the strategies employed by the more successful students may be learnt by those who are less successful*”. Furthermore, they believe that teachers can encourage students to use LLS for the benefit they bring in enhancing individual’s ability to learn a foreign language.

Griffiths argues that LLS can be learnt by learners whether by imitating their successful mates’ strategies or by the influence of the teacher toward their use. The teacher should push

his/her learners to use LLS effectively or directly teach them how to use them. Researchers are more and more interested in exploring the effect of LLS in increasing the degree of success in language learning.

Griffiths (2004) argues that LLS theory is convenient to the contemporary teaching methods and approaches. For example, memory and cognitive strategies suit best the Grammar Translation Method in which vocabulary and grammar are emphasized, as they can be used in the Audio-Lingual Method to make the patterning of automatic responses characteristics more effective. The cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies are involved in learning from errors which emerged from the inter-language theory. Compensation and social strategies can be embodied in the communicative competence theory and the communicative language teaching approach. And suggestopedia is a method that implicates the affective strategy. Since the learning strategy theory and theories, methods, and approaches can work side by side, it is conceivable that this theory will join the contemporary eclectic syllabus.

1.2.5. Defining Strategy

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the origin of the term “*strategy*” goes back to the 19th century, from French *stratégie* and the Greek *strat gia* which means generalship. It is used to designate a plan of action designed to achieve a long term or overall aim. The word strategy is used in different domains such as military, economics, business, etc. However, in language learning it pertains to a set of synonyms such as “technique”, “tactic”, and “skills” that researchers make use of in order to describe this notion in somewhat different ways.

1.2.6. Language Learning Strategy

The changes occurring in language learning methodologies and approaches paved the way to developing researches in that field. These reforms and developments are a result of changes over time that happened in ELT. There was a shift from a complete focus on teaching

strategies to a focus on learning strategies; where it is the learner who is centered and no more the teacher. For a long time, the learners' concerns were relatively neglected (Dansereau, 1978, cited in Merlin, Wittrock, American Educational Research Association, 1986) and much less concern was devoted to language learning process from the learner's side (Tarone & Yule, 1989). Starting from the point that the learner forms a considerable part within the teaching and learning processes, more attention is devoted to the role of the learner. All the processes and procedures employed during learning, including the language learning strategies are taken into consideration. Oxford (1990: 1) defines:

...language learning strategies specific actions, behavior, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or the use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability.

R. Oxford defines LLS as choices made by the learner consciously in order to manage learning and make it simpler and easier in learning a second or a foreign language. Oxford (1990) considers that the aim of LLS is being oriented toward the development of the communicative competence.

In addition, in a survey article, Weinstein and Meyer 1986 (cited in Merlin and Wittrock (eds) 1986) define LLS as "*behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning*" which are "*intended to influence the learner's encoding process*". In this case, Weinstein and Meyer define LLS not only as a behavior but also as thought.

Moreover, Tarone 1983 (cited in Faerch and Kasper, 1983) defines LLS as the effort that learners make in order to progress in their leaning mainly the linguistic and sociolinguistic competences in L2 and add it to their inter-language competences, saying "*language learning strategy is an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language to incorporate these into one's interlanguage*

competence". LLS are a way to expand learners' competencies and add them to their previously acquired background.

Finally, in the same context, second language acquisition, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) explain that LLS are "*the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information*". That is to say ways that are applied in order to reach and acquire some new information, how these strategies are applied by learners in order to acquire a second or a foreign language.

LLS have always been used although they have been conceptually formalized only recently. LLS are an important tool within the learning process as proved by research stating that the use of LLS pushes learners to become more successful in learning a foreign language. Moreover, they are important because learners need to keep learning even when they are not in a formal classroom setting.

Therefore, whenever the language learner is confronted to a language learning task such as writing, s/he will make use of the several different strategies in order to accomplish the task in hands. The task will be worked out successfully if the learner succeeded to choose and use the appropriate LLS (Richards, and Lockhart, 1996).

1.2.7. The Features of LLS according to Oxford

Oxford (1990: 9) argues that LLS have the following features:

- 1- Serve to develop the main objective which is communicative competence
- 2- Help learners to become self-directed
- 3- Expand the role of teachers
- 4- Are problem-oriented
- 5- Are techniques used by the learner for successful learning
- 6- Involve many aspects of the learner besides the cognitive one
- 7- Back up the learning process directly and indirectly

- 8- Sometimes they are not visible
- 9- Are conscious most of the time
- 10- Are teachable
- 11- Are flexible
- 12- Are affected by various factors

For Oxford, LLS are means to develop the communicative competence within learners, i.e they are primary used by learners to communicate effectively. It is observed also that they help learners to manage their learning by themselves, and become autonomous in their learning. When using LLS the learner does not depend only on the teacher's orientation, instruction, or help, s/he can work alone using the required techniques. In addition, they help learners to solve issues and problems related to the learning process. These strategies require the cognitive, the compensation, the memory, the metacognitive, the affective, and the social sides of the learner for successful learning, in a direct way involving direct learning, or in an indirect way involving indirect learning. Direct learning involves directly the target language, which requires mental processing of the language like summarizing, memorizing, and analyzing. However, indirect learning involves indirect touch with language. Its role is to focus, organize, and check...etc the learning. Moreover, LLS are techniques the learner uses consciously that may become unconscious after practice, and sometimes they are not visible especially the strategies involving the mental processes. It is assumed that LLS can be taught and can be used for several tasks; they can fit any kind of learning. It is observed that LLS use is affected by many factors such as motivation, gender, culture...etc.

1.2.8. Language learning strategies classification

Language Learning Strategies have been classified by many scholars like Rubin, Oxford... depending on the specific criteria that fit their needs. However their taxonomies are almost the same without any radical changes.

The mentioned researches on LLS take roots from the framework of learning strategies which started in the early seventies that focused on LLS of successful language learner (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975; cited in Griffiths, 2004) (Naiman et al., 1978). These researchers observed lists of language learning strategies applied to ESL/EFL learners. As mentioned above, there are a number of strategies that are studied and classified by many researchers. Comprehensive classification schemes of learner strategies have been advanced to illustrate and interpret the data gathered from the descriptive studies conducted in the sake of outlining the transformation and often blurred definitions of self-reported strategies. Researchers relied on their own observations to describe the language learning strategies as used by learners, and developed a list of learning strategies taken from many sources.

Researcher(s) / year	LLS Classification
Naiman et al. (1978)	1- Active-task approach 2- Production of language as a system of units 3- Production of language as a tool for communication 4- Regulation of the affective requirements 5- Guiding and orienting L2 performance
Rubin (1981)	1- Direct- influence strategies a- Clarification/verification b- Monitoring c- Memorization d- Inductive reasoning e- Deductive reasoning f- Practice 2- Indirect-influence strategies a- Conceive occasions for practice b- Production tricks

Brown and Palinscar (1982)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Cognitive strategies 2- Metacognitive strategies 3- Social-affective strategies
O'Malley et al. (1985)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Cognitive strategies 2- Metacognitive strategies 3- Social-affective strategies
Oxford (1990)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Direct strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- Memory strategies b- Cognitive strategies c- Compensation strategies 2- Indirect strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- Metacognitive strategies b- Affective strategies c- Social strategies

Table 1: LLS classification from 1978 to 1990

The table displays the different strategies classifications from 1978 to 1990. It illustrates the various types of strategies as elaborated by researchers in the field of LLS like Naiman, Rubin, Brown and Palinscar, O'Malley, and Oxford. From the table, it is noticed that these classifications are more or less similar.

1.3. Culture

1.3.1. Definition of Culture

Hofstede (1980: 21) defines culture as *“the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another”*. This collective programming represents language, customs, values...etc which are not always visible to outsiders or people coming from other cultures. The “cultural iceberg” metaphor (Hall & Hall, 1990; Oxford,

1995, cited in Oxford, 1996) which describes this phenomenon implies that certain elements of culture such as beliefs and values are under the surface of consciousness (the submerged part of the iceberg). And other elements like clothing lie in the conscious area (the surface). The elements that often influence the way people learn language are the less conscious (Oxford, 1996).

Oxford, Hollaway, and Horton-Murillo 1992 (cited in Oxford, 1996: x) state, “[...]culture often does play a significant role in the learning styles [and strategies]... adopted by many participants in the culture.” There is a fact arguing that learners from different cultural backgrounds are predisposed to use certain strategies, and many language learning strategies are assumed to be ethnocentrically biased in terms of effective language learning (Politzer and McGroarty, 1985; cited in TESOL Quarterly, Vol. 19, No. 1). Thus, it is not evident to assume that researchers have adequately investigated the influence and the impact of cultural background on LLS preferences and use (Politzer & McGroarty, 1985). Bedell 1993 (cited in Oxford et al., 1996) reached the result that learners from different cultural groups use particular kinds of learning strategies at different levels of frequency.

1.3.2. Relationship between Culture and LLS

Many studies argue that the socio-cultural background is an important variable that affects LLS (Bedell & Oxford, 1996; Grainger, 1997; Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995). Bedell and Oxford 1996 (cited in Oxford, 1996) conducted 36 cross-cultural reviews in strategy use from a variety of cultural backgrounds. They concluded that cultural backgrounds influence the choice and frequency of LLS used by L2 learners. These reviews showed different results. Some suggested that Asian students of English as a foreign language (EFL) tend to use more memory strategies than other categories.

Grainger (1997) investigated strategy use by accounting for Strategy Inventory for Language Learning with 133 learners of Japanese in an American university. The study showed that learners of Japanese use social strategies the most and affective strategies the least. It revealed also that Asians manage better their affective side, remember better, and compensate better than English-speaking learners. It is further suggested that the mother tongue influences strategy use, stating that Asian languages are similar to the Japanese one.

Oxford's and Burry-Stock's 1995 (cited in Oxford, 1996) research compared six sets of data from Puerto Rico, Taiwan, China, Japan, Egypt, and the United States. The aim of these researches was to support the validity of SILL as a research tool, and relate the use of certain strategies to certain cultures. As a result this study noticed a uniqueness of certain language learning tasks and how race (as related to cultural tendencies) influences the type of strategy used by language learners. Chamot (2004: 18) states:

[...] the learner's goals, the context of the learning situation, and the cultural values of the learner's society can be expected to have a strong influence on choice and acceptability of language learning strategies. For example, in a culture that prizes individual competition and has organized its educational system around competitive tasks, successful language learners may prefer strategies that allow them to work alone rather than social strategies that call for collaboration with others.

Chamot addresses the link between LLS as used by the learner and his/her socio-cultural background. She argues that the choice of LLS is determined by the task in front of the learner which is determined beforehand by the socio-cultural factor because the cultural context determines the LLS to be used.

Oxford (1996: x) agrees on the fact that “*the cultural background affects strategy choice*”, culture is regarded as a considerable variable in influencing the choice of the learner in terms of LLS. After SILL studies conducted by Chamot (2004), she illustrated learning strategies preferences manifested by learners from different cultural backgrounds. The following example illustrates this influence. An ethnic Chinese study conducted with

Singaporean students studying foreign languages like French and Japanese revealed that the students have the tendency to choose social strategies over the other ones especially the affective strategies (Warthon, 2000).

All these studies reached evidence that culture carries on a great influence on LLS use among learners. In order to obtain the results mentioned above, Bedell and Oxford (1996), Grainger (1996), Burry-Stock and Oxford (1995), relied on SILL as a report format which serves as a reliable way to report students' strategy use. The preferences on LLS types are further explained in terms of various factors, in this case, culture.

1.4. Theoretical Frameworks

1.4.1. Oxford's LLS Classification

Jones 1998 (cited in International Education Studies, Vol. 3, No. 3, August 2010) argues that Oxford's taxonomy is more comprehensive and detailed than the precedent ones. According to Oxford, the aim of LLS is to develop communicative competencies. Thus, she divided LLS into two categories which are subdivided into six subcategories, as follows.

The direct strategies that involve direct learning and use of the new language are subdivided into three subcategories: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. This is as far as the direct strategies are concerned.

In addition, the indirect strategies which contribute indirectly but powerfully to language learning are also subdivided into three subcategories: meta-cognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. As it is shown in the following table (Oxford, 1990).

Direct strategies	Indirect strategies
1. Memory strategies a. Creating mental linkages b. Applying images and sounds	1. Metacognitive strategies a. Centring your learning b. Arranging and planning your

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Reviewing well d. Employing action <p>2. Cognitive strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Practicing b. Receiving and sending messages c. Analyzing and reasoning d. Creating structure for input and output <p>3. Compensation strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Guessing intelligently b. Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing 	<p>learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Evaluating your learning <p>2. Affective strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lowering your anxiety b. Encouraging yourself c. Taking your emotional temperature <p>3. Social strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Asking questions b. Cooperating with others c. Empathesing with others
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Table 2: Oxford's Taxonomy

1.4.2. Socio-cultural theory and second language learning

Vygotsky study focused on how social factors influence the child's development. He stressed the four basic principles underlying his theory. First, language plays a central role in mental development. Second, development cannot be separated from its social context. Third, learning can lead to development. Finally, learners construct their knowledge. In the context of second language acquisition, Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 197) used the framework of Ratner 2002 (cited in Lantolf and Thorne, 2006: 197) arguing that the socio-cultural theory (SCT) explains the influence of the cultural environment on the human cognitive activity, that is to say, the human mental activity is mediated through cultural artifacts, activities, and concepts.

Within this framework, humans are understood to utilize existing cultural artifacts and to create new ones that allow them to regulate their biological and behavioral activity. Language use, organization, and structure are the primary means of mediation. Practically speaking, developmental processes take place through participation in cultural, linguistic, and historically formed settings such as family life and peer group interaction, and in institutional contexts like schooling, organized sports activities, and work places, to name only a few.(Lantlof and Thorne, 2006: 197)

This theory not only looks at how peers and adults influence individual learning, but also at how cultural beliefs and attitudes influence individual learning, “*Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level*” (Vygotsky, 1978: 57). According to Vygotsky, children are born with biological constraints within their minds, and it is the role of culture to provide “tools of intellectual adaptation” (Vygotsky, 1978). First, these tools represent a guide to the child that orients him/her to use his/her mental abilities in such a way that is adaptive to his/her culture. For instance, one culture may emphasize memorization strategies like note-taking, others may use other tools such as reminders or memorization. Second, Vygotsky stresses the vital role that social interactions play in child’s cognitive development, as he argues that the cognitive development may differ with divergent cultures. Third, Human mental functioning is affected by culture.

It is claimed that even when the individual reflects upon various things in isolation, i.e without any interaction or exchange, he produces behaviors impacted by cultural elements like beliefs, values, and tools of intellectual adaptation (Vygotsky, 1978). Humans have innately socio-cultural cognitive activity. And above all, these beliefs, values, and intellectual tools vary greatly from one given culture to another. According to Lantolf & Throne (2006), the same process happens in the formal learning settings like schools.

Learning is a mediated process where learners do not act in the world directly; rather their mental functioning and cognitive activities are mediated by the cultural artifacts surrounding them such as language. It is also a process of internalization where the learner comes to interact with others and thus, the cultural elements shape and convert the internal mental functioning of the individual. Imitation has an important role in this process (Vygotsky, 1978). In addition, within the research conducted by Joy and Kolb (2009), it is argued that the cultural environment plays a considerable role in the way individuals learn;

taking into consideration the experiential learning theory which defines learning process as a result of experiences. This theory is contrasted with didactic learning in which the learners play a passive role.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the different theories related to the study. It started up with the distinction between language acquisition and language learning and reviewed briefly how learners learn a second or a foreign language, and stated the techniques they use in order to make of this process a successful one. LLS represent these techniques that are assumed to be a means to successful learning. Furthermore, it is assumed that many factors contribute in influencing their use, mainly the socio-cultural background of the learner. Support is traced from the Socio-Cultural Theory which assumes that the cultural environment within which the learner lives influences his/her learning. Many studies illustrated the tendency of learners to opt for certain types of learning strategies instead of others. This fact is explained by the cultural background of the learner in the current research.

Chapter Two

Research Design

This chapter deals with the methodological tools that are used to sort out the issue raised in the previous sections namely to explore the impact that the socio-cultural background has on learners' use of LLS. It also seeks to determine whether the socio-cultural background of the learners influences their strategy use. It consists of two sections, data collection and data analysis. The first part deals with the description of the research tools mainly the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) questionnaire and the structured interview. The second part is devoted to the description of the procedures used to analyze the data collected in a quantitative and a qualitative analysis.

2.1. Research Tools

The present study makes use of the SILL and of a structured interview as research tools in order to collect data. The former serves to determine the frequency of LLS, and the latter provides an overview of the cultural background of the learners. As it is known, SILL is a sort of questionnaire. It is represented under two forms, a 50-item questionnaire addressed to learners of English as a second or foreign language, and an 80-item questionnaire addressed to native English speakers learning other languages. The present study makes use of the 50-item SILL which is addressed to Master II students of English in MMUTO. And it is made of six parts and each one pertains to a specific learning strategy. It is rated in terms of Likert-scaled items (scale 1 to 5, ranging from "never or almost never" to "always or almost always"). It is admitted that it has the same general arrangement and composition as the Learning and Study Strategy Survey (LASSI) (Weinstein et al., 1988; cited in Oxford, 1999). "I try to find patterns in the language." Is an example of SILL items.

The principal goal of SILL is to furnish a general description and overview of the individual learner's common strategy use, rather than a specific description of the strategies

used by the learner on a particular language task. The results of the SILL can be used in different ways. In this case SILL is used to identify relationships between strategy use and a host of additional background factors (ibid), mainly culture.

In addition to the questionnaire, a structured interview is used to collect data from the cultural perspective. It is needed in the present research for its appropriateness and usefulness for co-constructing data in an authentic setting and direct contact (Atkinson and Silverman, 2005). The structured interview explains the choice of learners for opting for certain strategies. It plays the role of mediating between the use of certain types of strategies by learners and the reasons behind this frequency. That is to say, it attempts to explain the latter by associating it to a variable affecting LLS mainly the socio-cultural background of the learner such as learners' past experiences in learning English. Certain students may be accustomed to use memory strategies in middle and high schools due to their belonging to an oral society where they tend to memorize everything. The present interview relies on the work of Simy Joy and David A. Kolb which examines the role of culture on the learning process.

2.1.1. Corpus of the study

The setting of the study takes place in the department of English MMUTO. This choice is made for practical reasons which are, first, the students study English as a foreign language and the focus of the study is to investigate language learning strategies as used by the students when using English. The other reason is that university students are more aware about the strategies they use. This study makes use of a selected corpus that comprises 82% of Master II Language and Communication students in the department of English of MMUTO responding for the SILL and 14 participants responding to the structured interview.

2.1.2. Criteria of selection

The sample embodies 45 participants from Master II students in Language and Communication option in MMUTO. This selection is made in terms of random sampling, disregard both age and gender.

2.2. Data Analysis

The study uses a mixed-method research; the data analysis is based on a quantitative and on a qualitative analysis of the findings. The quantitative analysis is based on statistics that show the frequency of strategy use by learners, and the qualitative analysis interprets the results gathered about the learner's socio-cultural background.

2.2.1. Statistical Package for Social Sciences

The data gathered with the SILL are analyzed by means of SPSS 20.0 which stands for *Statistical Package for Social Science*. It is a windows based program which serves to analyze quantitative data, by performing data entry and analysis which will end up in statistics displayed in tables and graphs needed for the research at hand.

It is assumed that every learner makes use of a set of strategies that enable him/her to learn more effectively and acquire language proficiency (Oxford, 1999: 115). Thus, this study analyses the frequency of strategy use among learners and explain the factor behind the choice of strategy type. In other words, the socio-cultural background of the learner. This will be determined by matching the results of the SILL to the results of the interview which will sort out the socio-cultural background of the students.

2.2.2. Qualitative Content Analysis

The structured interview is analyzed with qualitative content analysis which is defined as a systematic technique based on turning long pieces of texts into smaller and explicit units named codes (Weber, 1990). It is divided into two general categories: the conceptual analysis and the relational analysis. This study makes use of the conceptual analysis which consists of detecting frequently used concepts like words, phrases, or sentences, to record the frequency of certain aspects of the content; for example sentences like “I always try to overcome my limitations”.

Conclusion

This section has shed light on the research design of the study. It has showed the means of data collection and the procedures of data analysis. It has described the mixed-method research that combines quantitative and qualitative methods. The research combined the SILL questionnaire developed by Oxford and the structured interview. Oxford’s SILL is used to rate the frequency of LLS use, whereas the structured interview is designed to relate the learner’s selection of LLS to their socio-cultural background.

Chapter Three

Results

This chapter deals with the empirical side of the study. It advances the findings and the results reached after the analysis of 45 participants' answers in the 50 SILL items and the answers of 14 students with the structured interview's questions. The analysis aims at rating the frequency of the different types of LLS use and at sorting out the most used strategies by the students in the department of English. Moreover, it describes the socio-cultural background of the students displayed in the structured interview which will be a determinant factor in explaining the reasons behind opting for certain strategies and neglecting others. The results are presented in percentages displayed in histograms and pie charts for more explicit and clearer highlight concerning SILL, and the results of the interview are interpreted according to the qualitative content analysis. This chapter is divided into two parts, the findings related to the SILL and the findings related to the structured interview.

3.1. Presentation of SILL findings:

The SPSS 20.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) method is used to analyze the data gathered with the SILL items addressed to 45 participants of Master II students of the department of English. Each part of the SILL represents a specific strategy, and each part is rated and represented in a chart according to the results obtained from the participants' answers.

1.2. Participants

All the participants belong to Master II students Language and Communication from the department of English UMMTO, coming from the same socio-cultural background. They showed a noticeable frequency in their strategy use as illustrated in the following tables describing the results.

3.1.1. Direct Strategies:

3.1.1.1. Memory Strategies:

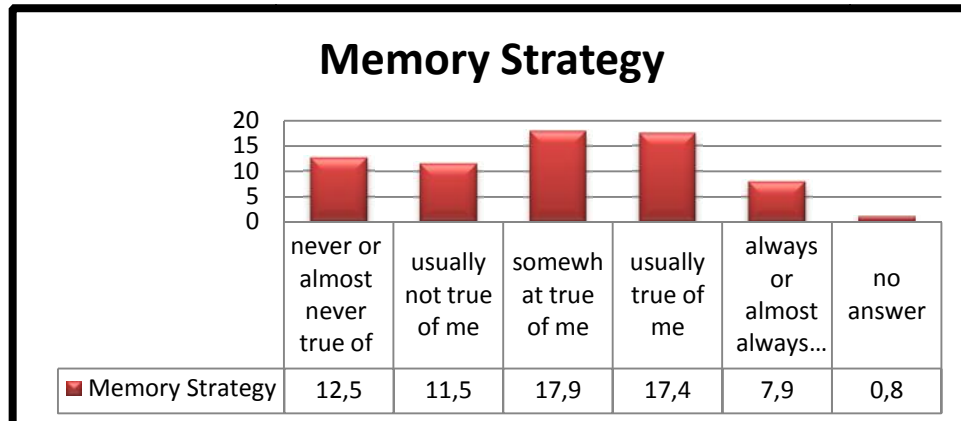


Diagram 1 : Frequency of Memory Strategies among Students

The diagram represents the frequency of memory strategy use among students. The results show that this strategy is usually used by students with 17.4% of answers for ‘usually true of me’ scale; only 7.9% of students use it always. A high percentage is noticed in the scale ‘somewhat true of me’ with 17.9% of answers.

3.1.1.2 Cognitive Strategies:

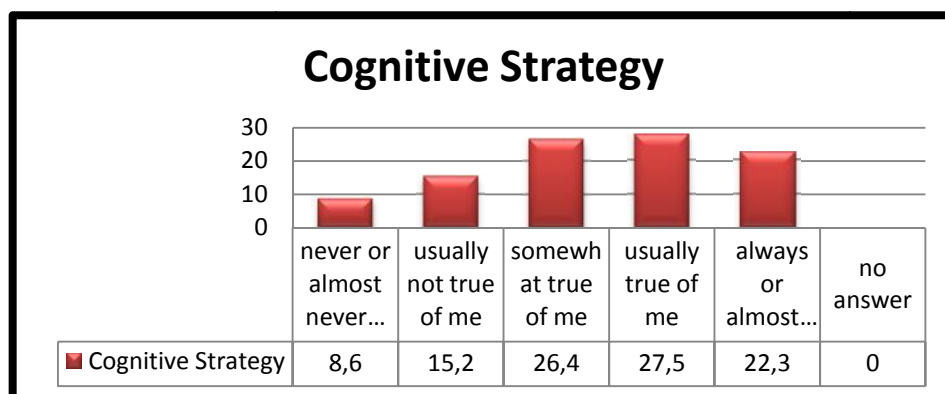


Diagram 2 : Frequency of Cognitive Strategy among Students

The second diagram corresponds to the data gathered for the Cognitive Strategies. The analysis revealed that the students claim to usually use this strategy with the highest

percentage of 27.5% for the scale ‘usually true of me’. A considerable percentage is recorded for the scale ‘always or almost always true of me’ with 22.3% of the answers.

1.1.1.3. Compensation Strategies:

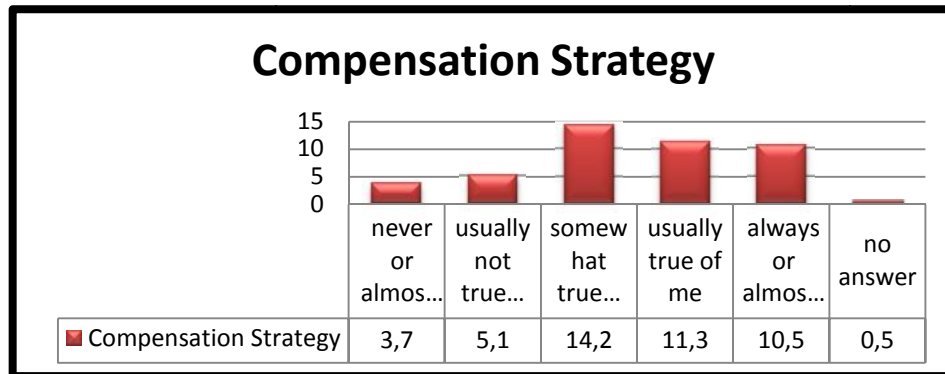


Diagram 3 : Frequency of Compensation Strategy among students

The third diagram represents the results for Compensation Strategies. The results demonstrate that the highest percentage is noticed in the scale ‘somewhat true of me’ with 14.2% of answers. Only 11.3% of answers recorded for ‘usually true of me’ and only 10.5% for ‘always or almost always true of me’

3.1.2. Indirect Strategies:

3.1.2.1. Metacognitive Strategies:

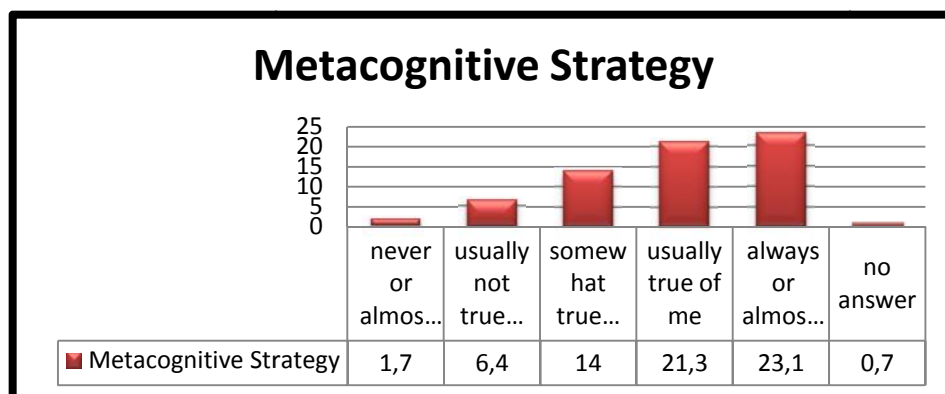


Diagram 4: Frequency of Metacognitive Strategy among students

For the fourth diagram, it represents the Metacognitive Strategy. The results show that these strategies are highly used by the students with the percentage of 23.1% of the answers

for the scale of ‘always or almost always true of me’. And 21.3% of answers represent the scale of ‘usually true of me’.

3.1.2.2. Affective Strategies:

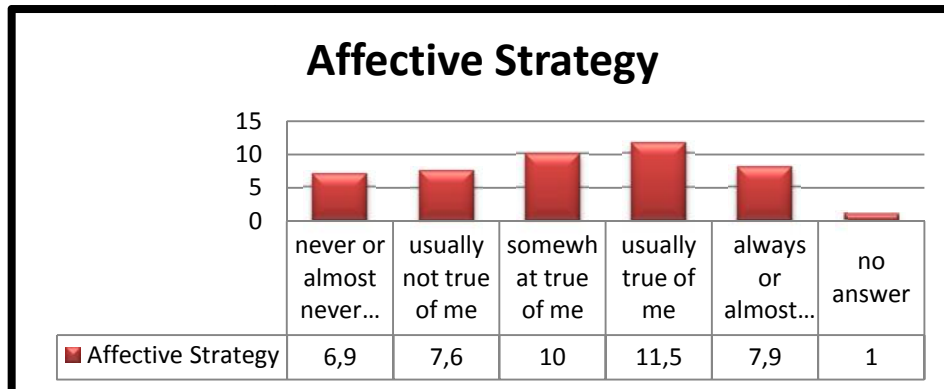


Diagram 5 : Frequency of Affective Strategy among students

The fifth diagram displays the Affective Strategies. These strategies are the least used ones, with only 11.5% for the scale ‘usually true of me’ and 7.9% for the scale ‘always or almost always true of me’.

3.1.1.3. Social Strategies:

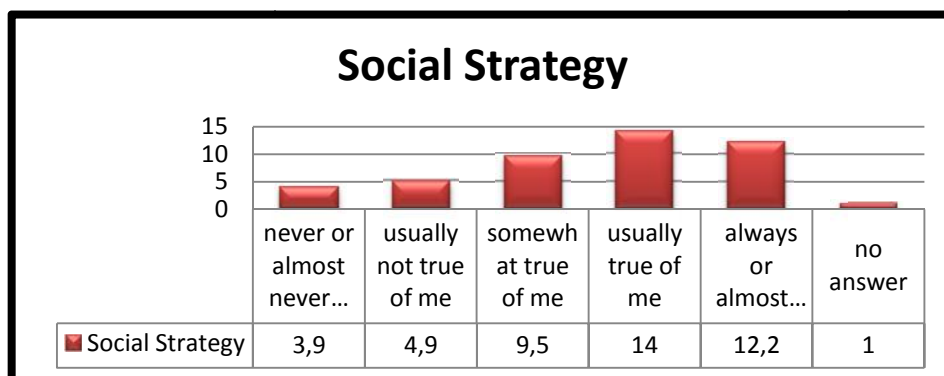


Diagram 6: Frequency of Social Strategy among students

The last diagram represents the Social Strategies. The use of these strategies is not frequent among students since only 12.2% of answers are recorded for the scale of ‘always or almost always true of me’, and the highest percentage reaches only 14% in the scale ‘usually true of me’.

3.1.3. the frequency of the six strategies

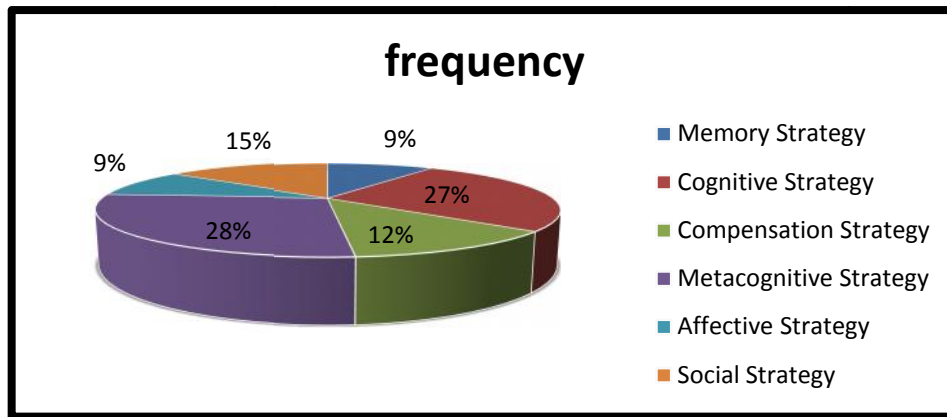


Diagram 7 :the frequency of the six strategies among students

This diagram displays the frequency of the six strategies together to show the most used strategies by the students and the least used ones. As it is highlighted, from the first sight, the results reveal that the most used strategy by the students is the Metacognitive Strategy with the percentage of 28%, then comes the Cognitive Strategy in the second position with 27%. In the third position, comes the Social Strategy with 15%, and 12% for the Compensation Strategy in the fourth position. In the last position, comes the Memory Strategy and the Affective Strategy with the same percentage of 9%.

1.2. Presentation of the structured interview findings

This part is devoted to the results obtained from the structured interview conducted with 14 participants from Master II Language and Communication. The interviews are recorded in the form of audiotapes which are transcribed into written texts (taking only the essential information). By means of the transcription, an analysis based on qualitative content analysis is made for the sake of obtaining answers concerning the socio-cultural background of the learners. This part is also important in determining whether the socio-cultural background of the students has an influence on their strategy use. Hence, the analysis of the data is made by coding the text into categories, then making correlations between them, and finally attributing meaning to each one following the IAR (Instructional Assessment Resources) steps of qualitative content analysis.

1.3. Participants

The participants are students of Master II Language and Communication, and represent 14 students who responded to the SILL. They all belong to the same socio-cultural background, that is to say, to the Berber society. The selection is made at random respecting only their socio-cultural background.

1.4. Part One

- **Is your society an oral or written one?**

For the first question, almost all students say that they belong to an oral society. Only three students consider it as being both an oral and a written society.

- **Were you accustomed to memorize passages in your past experiences as a learner of English language? If yes, did it help you?**

Nearly all the students admitted to be accustomed to memorize for studies in their past experiences at school and said that memorizing was helpful for their studies. One of them said: “...when learning for the exams, I used to learn by heart lessons related to studies”, and another said: “I used to memorize some passages not all”.

- **Did you have the tendency to learn by heart popular songs or tales of your culture? Did it help you in your studies?**

Almost all the students admitted that they have never been accustomed to learning by heart songs or tales related to their culture, advancing that they are for no help in their studies.

1.5. Part Two

- **Were you accustomed to repeat, analyze and summarize passages in your previous experiences as a learner of English? Did this have a positive impact on your studies? If yes, why?**

Some students used to summarize, some others used to analyze, and others used to repeat passages, and sometimes they used to do the three together, arguing that they are important strategies which allow students to remember well and be active learners, thus succeed in their studies. One of them advanced the following: “I used to summarize and repeat in my own way ...it allowed me to improve my learning and determine my way of learning”. Another confirmed that: “of course when we are studying we have to summarize and analyze in our way especially in the lycée, it had an impact but positive of course, when I analyze things related to my studies I keep them in mind then repeat them in my own way”.

- **Did your parents or teachers encourage you to reflect upon different things and question matters related to your everyday life? Explain**

All the participants said that learning begins first at home and both teachers and parents encourage students and children to be active in their everyday life situations like making right

choices, questioning different behaviors, distinguishing between what is good for them and what is bad, and above all to never take things for granted.

- **Were your ideas welcomed by people surrounding you when it comes to solve matters of everyday life? If yes, give examples.**

All the participants admitted that their ideas were welcomed by others to a certain extent. That is to say, by their parents. If the idea serves their interests it is accepted, and with others the acceptance of a proposition or an opinion depends on both the situation and the persons whom they deal with.

1.6. Part Three

- **Did your teachers in middle and high schools encourage you to communicate and express yourself even when you did not have the exact words for a particular idea?**

Explain

The majority of the respondents admitted that their teachers in middle and high schools did not encourage them to speak despite language errors. One of the students advanced the following: *“in fact, in high school and middle school they did not encourage us to communicate fluently”*.

- **Were you taught to use some techniques that helped you to communicate fluently in your past experiences in school? If yes, what are the techniques? Did it help you?**

No participant confirmed to have been taught to use techniques for fluency, however they try to use some strategies by themselves in order to communicate in English like speaking in English with classmates outside the classroom, watching English movies, listening to English songs, reading English books... etc. they confirmed that those techniques were for a great help in their learning process.

- **In a situation where you are blocked, do you try to overcome your limitations or do you give up? Explain**

All the participants tasted the feeling of running short of ideas that could have allowed them to cope with different situations. However, they admitted that they always tried to overcome their limitations; only four students admitted to give up sometimes. For those overcoming limitations, one of them considers that as a means to affirming personality saying *“in a situation where I feel blocked, I try to overcome my limitations in order to, in a certain way affirm my personality... for instance in the classroom, if I don’t find words to express myself I don’t keep silent but I try to find a way to speak and overcome my limitation”*, and the others who give up affirm that if something does not work twice they abandon because they are not patient.

1.7. Part Four

- **Do you tend to plan your everyday life tasks? If yes, give examples.**

Only two participants tend to plan their studies tasks, the majority does not. The students do not like to plan because they find that the plans they draw are not respected at all, or simply they do not like planning. One of the participants admitted the following: *“I don’t really prepare this, it happens haphazardly, I mean not really, no”*.

- **Do you set goals and objectives in every task you undertake? If yes, who influenced you in doing so?**

Almost all the participants have an objective behind every task they undertake, whether in studies or in everyday life. One participant argued: *“I always set goals in every task because avoiding setting goals it doesn’t serve anything, if doing a task without objectives it won’t*

have a positive effect on us". They said to be influenced by their parents and sometimes by their teachers.

- **Were you accustomed to evaluate your experiences as a learner of English and your everyday life experiences?**

Nearly all the students tend to evaluate their experiences especially their learning process, because they find that this way is a suitable one for progressing and correcting mistakes. One of them said: *"...I do evaluate my experiences especially in learning...if I improved my English or not, if I developed some strategies that help me to learn better"*

1.8. Part Five

- **Have you ever been taught to reduce your anxiety? If yes, who helped you, teachers, parents...etc?**

Almost all the students admitted to have never been taught how to reduce their anxiety, some of them manage with it and others affirmed that they are not anxious. One of them affirmed the following: *"I've never been taught to reduce my anxiety, but I try to manage with it"*

- **Do you boost yourself to take risks or does anyone encourage you to do so?**

About taking risks, the majority of the students are not risk-takers; the minority tends to take risks and said to be influenced by their parents or teachers. One of them affirmed right away: *"I don't take risks"*

- **Did you tend to share your feelings with others and discuss them?**

The majority of students used to share their feelings with others especially with their friends because they live in the same society where they are exposed to share their feelings. One of them explained: *"we cannot not to share our feelings when we establish a communication"*

with everyone, in a group of people we are exposed and asked to share our feelings in order to establish a communication and maintain the conversation”.

1.9. Part Six

- **Were you accustomed to group working, and helping each other in your society? Do you have problems with groups whether at home or at school?**

When it comes to know about the attitudes of the participants toward group working, answers go between favoring group work and disdaining it. The majority does not have problems with groups. One said: *“I don’t really like to work in group but if some friends ask me to do it I’ll do it”*. The participant does not have problems with group work but does not favor it too. One other student said *“I remember I did not work in groups, but since three years ago I tried this new experience, I found it different and I see its positive impact on our way of thinking and dealing with things. Our society encourages learning in groups, when learning in group everyone will help the other, as humans we need to help each other”*. From the last citation, it is noticed that the environment in which the participant lives, encourages working in groups.

- **Are you shy to ask questions to clarify ambiguities? Why?**

Only two participants admitted to be shy to ask questions, whereas the others are not when it comes to clarifying things. One of them confirmed: *“when it comes to clarifying I’m not shy, I do always ask for more explanation, it’s for my interest and the interest of everybody”*.

- **Do you like to learn about others’ visions and cultures?**

For learning about cultures, the majority of the participants like to discover others’ cultures because it permits them to be open-minded and getting in touch with foreigners teaches them tolerance: *“I do like this because it helps me to be open-minded... tolerate others’ ways of thinking, accept them and to put an end to all kinds of stereotyping”*

- **Were you free to express yourself during class time or at home? Do you manage with interruptions? Why?**

On the issue of being free in self expression, the students admitted that they are not always free, they mentioned that it depends on the situation and the persons they manage with, adding that they are more likely to be free at home not in school. Most of them do accept interruptions which bring benefits to both sides not the opposite, because they respect others' opinions and are open for other propositions.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the findings of both the questionnaire and the interview with regard to the frequency of strategy use and the influence of the socio-cultural background of the students. The results reached with the SILL have shown that the students tend to use the metacognitive strategies in the first position, the cognitive strategies in the second place, social strategies in the third place, the memory strategies in the fifth place, and finally the affective strategies which come in the last position. Furthermore, the results obtained with the interview have indicated the influence the socio-cultural background of the students has on the use of LLS. This will be discussed in details in the next chapter providing further explanations and reasons behind this frequency in strategy use.

Chapter Four

Discussion

This chapter deals with the discussion of the results obtained in the previous chapter after applying the SPSS and Qualitative Content Analysis for the SILL and the structured interview respectively. The analysis is based on Oxford's theory and classification of LLS along with Vygotsky's SCT, for the interpretation and explanation of the findings. This chapter is organized according to the order presented in the Results chapter, and is divided into two main sections. It starts with the discussing of the findings related to the SILL results, then it compares the results of the latter with those of the structured interview, and finally interprets the reasons behind the frequent use of specific strategies among students in relation to their socio-cultural background by comparing the results to the theories mentioned in the first chapter that is to say the review of the literature, answering in this way the raised issue.

4.1. LLS Frequency among Students and their socio-cultural background

Concerning the first research question about the strategies that are used by the students in the department of English at MMUTO, the findings revealed a high use of metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategies, with a little use of compensation, memory and affective strategies. Elsewhere, numerous studies demonstrate and illustrate the influence and the impact of the socio-cultural background of the learner on the use of LLS. The use of the latter can be influenced by ethnicity (Liyanage, 2004; cited in Asian EFL Journal, 2004), the mother tongue (Grainger, 1997), previous language learning experiences (Poltzer and McGroarty, 1985; Wharton, 2000) ...etc. The present paper focuses mainly on the previous experiences of the students in learning English as a foreign language and the influence of the people surrounding them.

The three main LLS used by the students in UMMTO department of English are the metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategies respectively, with a rare use of compensation, memory, and affective strategies. The results of this study reflect similar results with two researches mentioned in the reviewed literature mainly the research conducted by Deneme (2010) in Turkey and Judge (2011) in Spain. On the other hand, one study reached differing results namely from the research conducted by Liyanage, Grimbeek, and Bryer (2010). Moreover, there are other researches which produced divergent and convergent findings as well (Lai, 2009; Alptekin, 2007; Brown, 2006; Riazi, 2007).

3.1.1. Memory Strategies

From the results obtained in the previous chapter, it is observed that 17.9% of Master II students in the department of English at UMMTO said that they somewhat use the memory strategies, and only 7.9% reported that they always use them (diagram 1). Thus this study reached differing results from Jiang & Smith (2009) qualitative study and concluded that Chinese students use most frequently memorization strategies. Explanations and evidence for the elucidation of this fact in the current study can be provided by the socio-cultural background of the students displayed with the results of the interview.

When the students were interviewed about their memory practices in their past experiences inside and outside the classroom, they admitted to be accustomed to memorize only for studies more precisely only for exams. They never memorize anything else like songs or tales of the Berber culture even though their traditions are transmitted via these songs and tales. Commonly, this ability to memorize cultural elements would be helpful when used within the learning process. That is to say, they would not find difficulties when using their memory abilities when studying since they are accustomed to such practices in society. One participant for example reported the following *“I used to learn by heart things, I mean lessons*

related to my studies for the exams...but I didn't used to learn any song or tale of my culture".

The students tend to use memory strategies less often within their learning process and this is explained by their past experiences in school, mainly in the middle and high schools, and in everyday life where they are not accustomed to employ their memory practices outside the classroom. The students confirmed to use their memory to retain information that can be remembered only for exams and do not employ their memory capacities for the sake of language learning. Therefore, the previous language learning experiences namely English is an influential factor in memory strategies use, as Politzer and McGroarty (1985) and Wharton (2000) indicates. In addition, even though memory strategies are believed to be a powerful tool in foreign language learning, researches conducted on that field report that students rarely rely on them. An explanation is provided stating that students might not use memory strategies beyond the elementary level as stated by a student *"it's no more about memorizing it's about understanding"*, or may be because they do not notice their use of these strategies, in other words, they are unaware of the numerous times where they use them (Oxford, 1990: 41).

The results of this research reflect the results of the work conducted in Spain by Judge (2011) where he explained that Spanish students tend to neglect the frequent use of memory strategies. He explained this fact by matching it to the previous experiences of the Spanish in school where they were accustomed to use frequently memory strategies, and rejecting them later in adulthood. These findings are similar to Lai's (2009) findings on how culture influences these strategies as used by Taiwanese students.

Surprisingly, the results of this current study indicate that the participants do not employ memory strategies frequently in their learning process even though they belong to an oral

society (Berber society). The Berber knowledge has been passed on orally from parents to children via everyday practices application. The values, conventions, and customs of the rural clan were passed on in the form of legends and myths only in the spoken form. For the last strategies, the study reached an unexpected result; the students seem to favor other strategies than the memory ones such as the metacognitive and cognitive ones.

4.1.2. Cognitive Strategies

The survey reveals that students frequently tend to use cognitive strategies. 22.3% affirmed to always use them, and 27.5% affirmed to usually use them (diagram 2). This strategy records a high percentage after the metacognitive strategies. As Oxford (1990: 43) emphasizes, cognitive strategies are typically found to be extremely popular strategies with language learners and essential in learning a new language. These strategies require and allow for direct and immediate implication or use of input, such as, saying or writing the FL words several times, using the FL words in different ways...etc.

According to the data gathered about the socio-cultural background of the students, the results revealed that the students tend to summarize, analyze, and repeat specifically for exams. Therefore it had a positive impact on their studies, since these techniques are believed to be essential in learning a language (Oxford, 1990). One of the participants said *“Yes I repeat some passages, because it helps me to remember, also I analyze in order to discover new words, and summarize...etc”*. Moreover, they do not use their cognitive capacities for studies only but in everyday life also where they are encouraged by their parents and teachers to be active agents and not passive, in other words subjects in life. And when it comes to giving their opinions, sometimes they are accepted and at other times depending on the situations and the persons they address. One of them admitted: *“of course you have to reflect about everything, for example the choices we make in our studies, my parents always stress*

the importance of doing such also the teachers, I think by doing such you will improve and you will be experienced in life... there are in some cases where my ideas are welcomed and sometimes they are not, it depends on the topic first and sometimes it happened to me to disagree with others”.

Similarly, from the data analyzed by Judge (2011), it is found that cognitive strategies are frequently used by Spanish students during their business communication tasks, and this is explained by their tendency to employ such strategies in their past experiences in secondary school during English class. Judge explained that students were encouraged to translate or to analyze grammar; a total focus on grammar. In addition, Arslan, Rata, Yavus, and Dragoescu (2012) (cited in the European Scientific Journal, 2012) conducted a similar study in Romania where they found that the Romanian students tend to use social and cognitive strategies, whereas, Turkish students use metacognitive and memory strategies the most.

From this description of the socio-cultural background it can be affirmed that students are greatly influenced by their surrounding and their past experiences which lead them to reflect upon things and apply these practices for studies mainly the application of cognitive strategies. Thus, the use of cognitive strategies is affected by the students' socio-cultural background as long as culture acts on the way they process information and the way they use their cognition (Earley and Ang, 2003).

The students reported a high frequency in cognitive strategies use after the metacognitive ones. Again, the students reflect the influence of their socio-cultural background on the use of these strategies. They display a tendency to use cognitive strategies in their past experiences as learners of English and the positive impact these strategies had on their learning process encouraged them to keep on employing them. In addition the encouragements of people surrounding them like parents or teachers played an essential role

in using their cognition like encouraging them to act on themselves and try to find solutions for problems. Parents and teachers are an essential part in the socio-cultural background of the students who impact on their LLS use in general and cognitive strategies in particular.

It is believed that there is a linear relationship between cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Green & Oxford, 1995, cited in Chamot, 2004; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). This is probably because cognitive strategies play an important role achieving a particular objective and metacognitive strategies indicate whether the objective is achieved or not (Phakiti, 2003), along with social strategies which emphasize the important role that people surrounding learners play. The results are explained by the socio-cultural background of the students in which they manifest determinant characteristics that explain the reasons behind favoring certain strategies and neglecting others.

4.1.3. Compensation Strategies

The results of the present work demonstrate that 14.2% of the students admitted to use compensation strategies somewhat and only 10.5% admitted to use them always (diagram 3). Compensation strategies are ranked in the fourth position after the social one. This use can be explained by the students' socio-cultural background.

From the results gathered with the interview it is observed that the students always try to overcome their limitations especially in the academic environment where they use some techniques that help them to communicate fluently. One of them affirmed “...*when I feel blocked and I don't have words to express myself I don't keep silent but I try to find a way and try always to speak and overcome my limitations...and when I have a problem I try to face it I don't give up*”. For their past experiences in school that is to say in middle and high schools, they affirm to have never been encouraged, neither to speak fluently nor to use techniques which allow them to use the foreign language for communication. Fluency was not

the main purpose of teachers, they confirmed. However, they advanced that they use other techniques by themselves which they admit to be very helpful in their language learning process, as advanced by one participant “*not really we did not have teachers who encouraged us to speak fluently...I use authentic materials like watching movies, documentaries in English; it helped me in my studies*”. Oxford (1990) explains that lower level students would employ compensation strategies more frequently due to their lack of knowledge.

Judge’s (2011) study reports that Spanish students do not tend to use compensation strategies, and this is explained by the high level of the students in English and their limited gaps in the language mastery. However, Saricoban and Saricaoglu (2008) report the opposite in Turkey. To them, Turkish students rather tend to use compensation and metacognitive strategies. The use of compensation strategies in this investigation does not coincide with the results of the above mentioned studies while the use of metacognitive strategies does. Moreover, the results obtained by Bolukbas in Turkey (cited in H. U. Journal of Education, 2013) revealed that the students use less compensation strategies and according to the explanation provided, the students have enough knowledge about the Turkish language to maintain a conversation without difficulty.

Therefore, from the results of the current study, it is concluded that the past experiences of the students in middle and high schools impacted in their present use for compensation strategies. As Kolb 1984 (cited in Joy and Kolb, 2009) confirms, knowledge is reached after the connection of understanding with repeating experiences. That is to say the low percentage in the use of compensation strategies might be the result of the students’ past experiences in school where they were not encouraged to support their learning mainly the learning of English for either comprehension or production despite lacks in knowledge (Oxford, 1990).

The compensation strategies are ranked in the fourth position with little use from students. This fact is explained by the students' past experiences in middle and high schools where they were not encouraged to support their learning by using new language despite limitations in knowledge. They were not taught to use strategies or techniques which could enable them to overcome limitations. Thus, the lack of compensation strategies use is the result of their past experiences in school where they were not encouraged by their teachers to use the language despite lack of knowledge.

4.1.4. Metacognitive Strategies

The highest frequency of strategy use is recorded with metacognitive strategies. 23.1% of the students claimed to always use them and 21.3% claimed to usually use them (diagram 4). Students reported that they seek opportunities to talk to native speakers, read as much as possible in FL, and watch language TV shows spoken in FL ...etc.

After dealing with the results obtained with the interview, it is noticed that students tend to organize, plan, and evaluate their learning and set goals and objectives in their tasks. Contrary to the assertion of Oxford (1990: 138) that students use metacognitive strategies occasionally and less often than the cognitive ones, the students in MMUTO department of English claim to use them more often than the cognitive ones. Explanations can be provided by the socio-cultural background of the students which plays an influential role in the use of metacognitive strategies. Most of the students affirm to plan their everyday tasks most of the time; although they do not respect the plans they draw. Yet, all of them reported to always set goals in every task they undertake, whether in studies or in everyday life. Moreover, students tend to evaluate their experiences be they academic or social, and admitted to be inspired by their parents and teachers in doing so, a participant admitted: *"I always make plans, I said always I will do this and this, for example, tomorrow I will do shopping"*. Another one

claimed: *“sometimes I have to plan my everyday life tasks I do not do things randomly but sometimes I just leave like that without planning...my family taught me before doing anything you have to set an aim and look forward and what benefit it may bring to you if there is no harm and thus, evaluate my experiences especially in learning”*. With imitation or collaboration individuals reach consciousness (Vygotsky, 1987) in other words, their way of learning is influenced by people and is manifested in the use of metacognitive strategies.

Razi’s (2012), Saricoban’s and Saricaoglu’s (2008) studies with Turkish students showed that Turkish students have a preference for metacognitive and compensation strategies. Also, Alptekin’s (2007) study showed that the tutored English learners mostly make use of metacognitive strategies due to their proficiency in language learning. Other researchs conducted in the Turkish context revealed the same findings, mainly Bekleyen (2006), Gerami and Baighlou (2011), Grossman (2011), Hamamci (2012), Izci and Sucu (2011), (cited in H. U. Journal of Education, 2013). These authors reached the conclusion that Turkish students use mostly metacognitive strategies. The findings of these studies are compatible with the results of the current study which reveals that Master II students use metacognitive strategies the most.

These results showed that the past experiences of students and their surrounding especially the people they approach or simply with whom they live, impact on the use of metacognitive strategies. Students’ tendencies to plan, organize, evaluate and settling objectives in their past experiences along with the influence of people surrounding them like parents or teachers is regarded as an important part of their socio-cultural background, and thus, impacted their strategy use namely the metacognitive ones. Thus, the latter is probably explained by the tendency of the students to coordinate their language learning process in their past and current experiences like planning their tasks especially the learning tasks. Moreover, students seem to be accustomed to set objectives and goals while performing a

given task whether in the academic environment or in everyday life. As they tend to evaluate their progress in learning the English language. Thus, the frequent use of these strategies among students is due to their shared past experiences in middle school and high school in particular and in everyday life in general.

4.1.5. Affective Strategies

The affective strategies are the least used ones along with memory strategies. Only 7.9% of students claim to always use them and 11.5% of them claim to usually employ them (diagram 5). They are ranked at the fifth position after the metacognitive, cognitive, social, and compensation strategies.

Oxford (1990) states that the use of affective strategies helps learners to regulate their emotions, and what is noticed with the present case study is that students do not resort to affective strategies. When compared to the results of the interview, the students affirm to have never been taught to manage their anxiety or reduce it; moreover most of them admit to never take risks. Whereas, when it comes to feelings sharing, most of the students exchange their perceptions and emotions, stating *“since we are living together we share feelings whether negative or positive: anguish, anger, happiness... that’s natural since we are living together, I do discuss my feelings with others”*. From the results obtained and the comparison established with the socio-cultural background of the students, it is observed that the low use of affective strategies comes from students’ experiences which do not accustom them to control their emotions and attitudes in relation to social matters in general, and learning in particular.

Bekleyen (2006), Grami and Baighlou (2011), Grossman (2011), Hamameci (2012), Izi and Sucu (2011) (cited in H. U. Journal of Education, 2013) reached the conclusion that the Turkish students use the affective strategies the least which is the case with the present research. They affirmed that the students when learning a language, experience lack of

motivation, attitude, and feel anxiety. In addition, the results reached by Bolukbas (cited in H. U. Journal of Education, 2013) revealed that the rare use of affective strategies is due to teachers' neglect to motivate students to use them during the teaching process. These findings apply also to the findings of the present study.

Thus, within the current study, the students transform their experiences with their parents or teachers through reflective observation or active experimentation. As it is known, the Berber society is regarded as an impressive society where self expression is not really encouraged, everything is hold inside especially when it comes to feelings expression. In the past, especially before the Berber Spring, people can not express themselves directly, notably when things have to do with their cultural identity. So they used to say things through songs, folklores...etc. As Goodman (2005: 57) stated "*Folklore provided virtually the only window through which Berber cultural production were tolerate*" As a result, the students interviewed, seem to have inherited this tendency to hold everything inside through history.

The least used strategies are the affective strategies along with the memory ones. This is certainly explained by the lack of affective support from people surrounding the students to control their emotions. As it is noticed, they are not really motivated. Moreover, the cultural tendency to neglect the expression of feelings, and the tendency to impress everything have an impact on those strategies.

4.1.6. Social Strategies

The social strategies come after metagognitive strategies and cognitive strategies in classification respectively. They are the third favored strategies. According to Oxford (1990), social strategies help in learning a foreign language involving other people. Indeed, cooperating with peers during class tasks, asking and trying to learn about FL speakers' cultures is an important step in the learning process. The findings reveal that 12.2% of

students affirmed to always use social strategies and 14% affirmed to use them usually (diagram 6).

In an attempt to find reasons behind this frequency, a description of the socio-cultural background of the students is conducted for clear interpretation. When students reported about their attitudes toward group working, half of them argued that they favor it and the other half does not, however most of them admitted to never have problems with it, one of them confirmed: *“I don’t really like to work in groups but if some friends ask me to do it I’ll do it but I will always work on myself”*. When asked about shyness while asking questions for clarification, almost all agreed on the fact that when it comes to clarify ambiguities there is no way for shyness. One of them explained: *“when it comes to clarifying I’m not shy, I do always ask for more clarification, it’s for my interest and the interest of everybody so as to do not get blurred and overpass the misunderstanding related to the theme we treat”*. In addition, one thing that the students like to discover is foreign cultures and other visions of the world. Most of them enjoy the fact of getting in touch with foreigners so as to learn about new perspectives and new practices, moreover they admitted that it is the best way to be open for other ways of perception and visions and above all to learn tolerance. About freedom for self expression, the students feel free at home, but not at school, explaining that at school there are some rules to respect which prevent them from talking freely. And when it comes to be interrupted while expressing themselves, they all affirmed that the interruptions which bring positive impact on both sides of the conversation are welcomed whereas the opposite is not, explaining that they are open for other propositions.

In the study conducted by Judge (2011), Spanish students employ social strategies like cooperating with peers or approaching proficient language users when dealing with business tasks. This tendency to employ social strategies is due to cultural factors such as collectivism in Spain (Hofstede, 2001). In addition, the study conducted with the Romanian students,

revealed that they have a preference for social and cognitive strategies (Arslan, Rata, Yavuz, Dragoescu, 2012). These findings are congruent with the findings of the present research in which the students reflect the frequent use of these strategies.

Collaboration is one important step within the learning process (Vygotsky, 1987), approaching people for the sake of acquiring new information is the matter of social strategies.

The social strategies come after the metacognitive and cognitive strategies respectively. From the interpretation of the results, it is deduced that the socio-cultural background of half of the students influences their strategies use. The fact of working on groups comes from their neighborhood where they are accustomed to work with each other. For instance, the Berber villages form a community based on mutual aid and support (tiwizi). In every aspect of life, the Kabyles express their social identity as belonging to a cultural group, therefore, this cultural belonging impacted on the learning process and is manifested in cooperative learning through the use of social strategies. In addition, learning about others' cultures and visions is part of their daily life which is regarded as a social act that involves approaching people for various matters.

4.2. The relationship between students' socio-cultural background and LLS:

Concerning the second research question, that is the influence of the socio-cultural background on LLS use within the same cultural environment, and starting from the hypothesis that culture influences LLS choice of the learners, the results of the current study revealed the same findings. The results affirm that the learning process cannot be separated from the learners' socio-cultural background, that is, the latter influences the English department students at MMUTO when selecting learning strategies. Yet, the results prove that

even within the same culture (Berber), the students tend to use different language learning strategies. Kolb (1984: 26) defines learning “*As a process whereby concepts are derived from and continuously modified by experience. No two thoughts are ever the same, since experience always intervenes*”. Kolb’s views of experiential learning coincides with the results of this current study, and reaffirm that a students’ learning strategies in the working environment is unique to them. The student’s progress is the result of the learning experiences they have and the prior knowledge and experiences they bring to each situation. The English department students use different language learning strategies, all the six language learning strategies are used by the students and the difference lies in the frequency of the usage which seems to be influenced by their socio-cultural background. Thus, metacognitive strategies are the most used. In addition, the results gathered from the qualitative data, indicate that the students of the department of English cannot separate their learning process from their socio-cultural background; this is shown in their option for certain strategies over others. Therefore, the results of this study coincide with Vygotsky’s SCT, which examines the role that culture plays in the way individuals learn. Moreover, it supports the present study in which the learning process in general and the learning strategies in particular are influenced by the socio-cultural background where the students live. The students manifested this influence on all the strategies use except for the memory ones. In O’Malley’s study, it is reported that more successful language learners use more metacognitive strategies (Griffiths, 2003), thus, the high level of students is associated with metacognitive strategies use. On the other hand Ehrman and Oxford 1995 (cited in Robertson, 2013) concluded that language learning proficiency is associated with the use of cognitive strategies (Griffiths, 2003: 59). Wong Fillmore (1982) reached another result stating that the use of social strategies rhymes with good language learners (ibid). In the current study, the strategies are ranked in the way they are presented in the SILL, each one is determined and influenced by the socio-cultural

background of the students that is to say whether past experiences or the influence of their surroundings. Oxford (1996: xi) stresses the differences in strategy use across cultures assuming that the cultural background impacts on strategy choice.

The way the students in MMUTO department of English filled on the SILL and the way they responded to the questions of the interview reveal that the students opt for certain strategies according to their socio-cultural background. The findings of the research correspond to the assertions made by Oxford (1996).

Conclusion:

This section was concerned with the interpretation of the findings. The results of this study reveal that research participants affirmed to use mostly metacognitive, cognitive and social strategies, which are to be found the most popular strategies among students besides the compensation, memory and affective strategies. Also, the results of the quantitative data (interview) affirmed that the cultural background of the learners influenced their choice of the language learning strategies. Thus the results confirmed our hypothesis that is, the socio-cultural background of the learner influences the choice of LLS.

General Conclusion

General conclusion

Our thesis investigated the relationship between Language Learning Strategies and the socio-cultural background of the Master II students Language Communication of MMUTO department of English. It stressed the frequency of strategy use among students and rated the most used strategies. It also attempted to give a valid explanation for the latter by matching the results of strategy use to the socio-cultural background of the learner.

Starting from the assumptions that the socio-cultural background of the learner impacts on LLS use (Oxford, 1994), the present study attempted to shed light on the influence of the socio-cultural background of the learner on LLS use within the same socio-cultural environment. In the hypothesis, we advanced that the socio-cultural background of the learner influences LLS use within the same socio-cultural environment, and the learners' choice of learning strategies is affected by their socio-cultural background.

This dissertation traced two main objectives. First, recording strategy frequency among students and determining the most used strategies, and second, relating these preferences with strategy use to their socio-cultural background and thus, determine the influence of the latter on strategy use. Hence, it is designed following LLS theory and SCT theory.

To conduct this study, we relied on mixed method research, in other words, we combined the qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection and data analysis. The case study represents a corpus composed of 45 students in Master II Language and Communication in MMUTO who responded to the SILL and 14 students who responded to the structured interview for data collection. The data were analyzed by SPSS and qualitative content analysis respectively.

The descriptive statistical analysis of the corpus revealed that Master II students of the department of English use more metacognitive strategies than the other strategies. The analysis demonstrated that 28% of the students tend to use metacognitive strategies the most, 27% for the cognitive strategies, and 15% for social strategies. These three strategies are the most used by the students of English in UMMTO. The least used strategies are compensation strategies with 12% of uses, and 9% for memory and affective strategies.

The qualitative analysis revealed the reasons that lead students to opt for a regular use of metacognitive, cognitive, and social strategies instead the remaining ones. From their answers, the students showed the influence of their socio-cultural background, mainly their past experiences as learners of English where they were accustomed to certain practices that favor the use of a particular type of strategy. Besides, they confirmed that the people surrounding them like their parents and their teachers influenced their everyday practices such as setting goals in every task they undertake.

In the discussion we interpreted the results and explained the reasons behind students' choice of certain strategies. It is admitted that their socio-cultural background does influence their strategy use and frequency. We explained that there is a close relationship between strategy use among Master II students and their socio-cultural background. These findings are compatible with Vygotsky's SCT theory. As they coincide with Oxford's work on cultural influence on LLS. The study argued that the regular use of metacognitive strategies is explained by the students' tendency to coordinate their own learning process by centering, arranging, planning, and evaluating their learning in their past experiences in school. As for the cognitive strategies, the students use them frequently mainly for summarizing, repeating, and analyzing, and once more, this is due to their past experiences in school where they are accustomed for such practices. Concerning the social strategies, 50% of the students reported

to be accustomed to involve somehow people in their learning, like working in groups, learning about others' cultures and visions...etc.

As far as the least used strategies are concerned, the compensation strategies are among the less often used strategies. The students manifested this less frequent use by their assumptions to have never been taught how to overcome their knowledge limitations when using the new language. Memory and affective strategies also, represent the less used strategies and occupy the last position as well. The students use memory strategies only to learn by heart lessons for exams and not for internalizing new language. Moreover, the students admitted to have never been taught and encouraged to regulate their emotions, attitudes, and motivations toward the learning process.

To sum up, the study affirmed that the socio-cultural background of the learner influences strategy use. Indeed, the students in MMUTO department of English manifested this influence in almost all the six strategies.

Recommendations for Further Research

A wide range of researchers use other ways to assess strategy use. Indeed, Oxford (1996: 3) argues that "*Think-aloud protocols (and other verbal report formats) constitute a main technique for assessing students' learning strategies*", among the various ways used to assess LLS, this technique permitted to many researchers to assess students' LLS use. It requires asking students about their intentions and the strategy to be used while doing a language task or just after finishing it. The aim behind using think-aloud protocols, is to unveil and reveal the strategies used among L2 learners undertaking language tasks. It is assumed that these protocols help to switch the attention from language use outputs to the ongoing process, i.e the process happening while doing a language task (learning strategies).

Thus, an investigation following this way in LLS assessing would be of a great interest and benefit in enriching the field of language learning strategies' research at the local level.

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Appendices

Appendix One

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

This form of strategy inventory for language learning (SILL) is for students of a foreign language (FL).

Please read each statement and write the number of each response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) in front of each one that tells HOW TRUE THE STATEMENT IS.

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

Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. **There are no right or wrong answers** to these statements.

This questionnaire is only destined for academic purposes and promises confidentiality.

Thank you for your participation!

Part A

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

Part B

10. I say or write new FL words several times

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

Part C

24. To understand unfamiliar FL words, I make guesses
25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in the FL, I use gestures
26. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in the FL
27. I read in a FL without looking up every new word
28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in the FL
29. If I can't think of an FL 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 FL
31. I notice my FL mistakes and use that information to help me do better
32. I pay attention when someone is speaking a FL
33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of a FL
34. I plan my schedules so I will have enough time to study a FL
35. I look for people I can talk to in a FL
36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in a FL
37. I have a clear goals for improving my a FL skills
38. I think about my progress in learning a FL

Part E

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

Part F

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

Appendix two:

The interview with the students

- Introduction to our topic, aims, nature, etc. Confidentiality.

Part one

- Is your society an oral or written one?
- Were you accustomed to memorize passages in your past experiences as a learner of English language? If yes, did it help you?
- Did you have the tendency to learn by heart popular songs or tales of your culture? Did it help you in your studies?

Part two

- Were you accustomed to repeat analyze and summarize passages in your previous experiences as a learner of English language? Did this have a positive impact on your studies? If yes, why?
- Did your parents or teachers encourage you to reflect upon different things and question matters related to your everyday life? Explain?
- Were your ideas welcomed by people surrounding you when it comes to solve matters of everyday life? If yes, give examples, if not, why?

Part three

- In a situation where you are blocked, do you try to overcome your limitations or do you give up? Explain
- Did your teachers in middle and high schools encourage you to communicate and express yourself even when you did not have the exact words for a particular idea? Explain

- Were you taught to use some techniques that helped you to communicate fluently in your past experiences in school? What are the techniques? Did it help?

Part four

- Do you tend to plan your everyday life tasks? If yes, give examples
- Do you set goals and objectives in every task you undertake? If yes, who influenced you in doing so?
- Were you accustomed to evaluate whether your past experiences as a learner of English or your everyday life experiences?

Part five

- Have you ever been taught to reduce your anxiety? If yes, who helped you, teachers, parents...etc?
- Do you boost yourself to take risks or does anyone encourage you to do so?
- Did you share your feelings with others and discuss them?

Part six

- Were you accustomed to group working, and helping each other in your society? Do you have problems with groups whether in school or at home?
- Are you shy to ask questions to clarify ambiguities? Why?
- Do you like to learn about others visions and cultures?
- Were you free to express yourself during class time or at home? Do you manage with interruptions? Why?