Preferred Language Learning Strategies by Year 6 Sub-Urban Primary ESL Learners in Learning Vocabulary

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Abstract
The Ministry of Education (MoE) has always focused on teaching English as a Second Language to be an effective platform for producing holistic learners. Vocabulary serves as one of the fundamental language components in the English language. Over the years, the level of vocabulary acquisition has been declining among the primary school pupils especially among the Year 6 learners. The School Based Assessment (SBA) revealed that many primary ESL learners could not be able to achieve the targeted proficiency level because of their low acquisition of vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary mastery influences the overall proficiency level of the learners. Various language learning strategies (LLS) can be utilised by Year 6 learners to enhance their ability to acquire vocabulary. Therefore, this research aims to identify the most preferred LLS by Year 6 learners from selected sub-urban schools in four states in Malaysia which are Johor, Melaka, Seremban, and Perak. Data were collected from an online survey questionnaire to complete this quantitative research. The survey consisted of 30 questionnaire items obtained from the "Strategy Inventory for Language Learning" (SILL) was administered to 100 respondents to investigate their most preferred and least preferred LLS in learning vocabulary. The research's findings indicated that the memory strategies and compensation strategies were the most frequently utilised LLS by the respondents in vocabulary learning. The metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, was the least frequently employed LLS. This research also will be a useful insight for ESL teachers to identify the learners' preferred LLS hence aiding them in planning relevant vocabulary teaching practices.
Keywords: Language Learning Strategies (LLS), Vocabulary Mastery, Sub-Urban Area, Primary ESL Learners, Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Introduction
In today's constantly evolving world, it is becoming increasingly important to master the English language. This is because English has now become widely recognized as a global language and it is considered as a second language in numerous countries (Ibrahim et al,.2023). Additionally, English is the primary language and is used for instruction and in

educational curricula in certain parts of the world (Pazilah et al., 2019). Besides, the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025) has emphasized the importance of students to become skilled and well-rounded bilingual speakers, underscoring the significance of the English language for Malaysian students who are learning English as a second language (ESL). (Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2013). As a result, having a strong command of the English language has become a crucial skill for the Malaysian ESL learners.

Furthermore, Ang et.al (2017) mentioned that each learner has his or her own perspective and ways of learning and adopting learning strategies. Language Learning Strategies (LLS) significantly contribute in enhancing students' learning and can be beneficial for enhancing their mastery of the language (Hashim et al., 2018). Besides, Pagalilauan (2023) mentioned that language learning strategies are crucial for ESL learners as they help in identifying the most convenient strategies to learn the language.

Issues in Vocabulary Mastery Among Young ESL Learners

In all Malaysian primary and secondary schools, English is a compulsory language and taught as a second language because it is considered as a crucial language in 21st century education (Nishanthini, 2018). In Malaysia, the mastery of the English language is encouraged at all levels of education, ranging from primary to tertiary education. Teaching vocabulary in Malaysia presents challenges due to the diverse learning styles among pupils, as well as large classroom sizes, particularly in urban and sub-schools where the number of students continues to increase annually (Ramli et al., 2013). Educators are responsible for employing various learning styles to teach vocabulary in large classrooms.

In addition, multicultural education is an integral part of ESL classrooms in Malaysia, as students come from different language and religious backgrounds. Every learner comes from a different language and religious background, and teachers must have a good understanding of multicultural education to enhance the teaching process (Abdullah & Abdullah, 2018). This is important because pupils may be influenced by their first language, which can hinder effective vocabulary learning. As a result, language learning strategies have been created to assist learners in recognizing their preferred learning styles in acquiring vocabulary.

Vocabulary is a crucial language component in the English language since it links and serves as an underground language component which is interrelated with other main skills. Vocabulary acquisition is essential to produce learners who are good in listening and comprehending, responding, reading and writing effectively. By the end of Year 6, the level of acquisition in English declined among the Year 6 learners. Based on the previous years of the School Based Assessment (SBA) among the Year 6 pupils, many of the pupils showed less satisfaction in acquiring Proficiency Level (PL) 6 which is labelled as the highest level of the learners' proficiency. These learners faced difficulty when they were in secondary education in pursuing secondary language learning. According to Chanderan and Hashim (2018), students often fail to learn English properly due to their lack of knowledge on vocabulary. Additionally, in 21st-century education, students play a significant role in ensuring their own learning, indicating a shift in traditional teaching practices. The current CEFR syllabus emphasises the importance of mastering Language Learning Strategies in facilitating students' overall language proficiency (John et al., 2021).

Magasvaran et al (2022) mentioned that motivation and interest among the learners play an essential aspect in determining their learning strategies. Hence, teachers should have a comprehensive understanding of the language learning strategies implied for the learners which can meet their needs and interests. According to Krashen (2007); Tiing et al (2021), a

proficient language learner will not only excel in one particular skill, but they will also become skilled in other skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary skills. Hence, various types of language learning techniques should be adopted by teachers to ensure that the students will do extremely well in vocabulary acquisition. Language learning strategies play a crucial role in using various language learning techniques to increase the learners' interest and motivation in learning all language skills including vocabulary acquisition.

The Role of Language Learning Strategies in Learning Vocabulary

Brown (2000); Oxford (2011) stated that language learning strategies play an important role in promoting self-directed learning among students (Tiing et al., 2021). These strategies allow students to actively engage in improving their language skills based on their preferences, thus enabling them to recognize their style of learning and learn independently.

According to Oxford (1990), Language Learning Strategies (LLS) are the techniques and methods utilised by learners to be active self-learners in acquiring their language learning skills, which are crucial for developing communication competence (Nair et al.,2021). Furthermore, Oxford and Gkonou (2018) mentioned that the utilisation of language learning strategies can foster independent, autonomous, and lifelong language learners. Thus, the learners have their own approach and strategy in learning vocabulary.

Besides, the utilisation of LLS promotes critical thinking and problem-solving abilities among students in learning vocabulary. The use of more than one LLS by the learners could improve their mastery of language learning. (Hashim et al., 2018); (Adan & Hashim, 2021) . A good language learner should have more than one language learning strategy which can improve their vocabulary acquisition.

Recent studies have primarily centred on the investigation of language learning strategies among university students and secondary learners Soupi et al (2022); Palani et al (2021); Rojalai et al (2021), with only a limited number of studies conducted among primary learners. Thus, the objective of this research is to investigate the Year 6 sub-urban learners' most preferred language learning strategies in learning and acquiring the vocabulary component in ESL classrooms. In addition, this study also investigated their least preferred language learning strategies in learning and acquiring the vocabulary components. Hence, there were two research questions been posed in this study which catered as guide to get the responses from the learners which stated as below:

1. Which language learning strategies (LLS) is the most preferred by the Year 6 sub-urban learners in learning vocabulary?
2. Which language learning strategies (LLS) is the least preferred by the Year 6 sub-urban learners in learning vocabulary?

These two research questions have been outlined in investigating the Year 6 learners' most preferred and least preferred language learning strategies from sub-urban schools. Besides, these questions help in discovering the effectiveness of the preferred language learning strategies which can be employed by the ESL teachers in teaching vocabulary.

Literature Review
Definitions of Language Learning Strategy (LLS)
Since 1970, scholars have been doing research on the way ESL learners learn the language where the focus of studies have shifted from behavioural to cognitive process. Definitions of

LLS vary from one scholar to another. According to Wenden and Rubin (1987), LLS can be defined as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information". O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defined LLS as "special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" whereas Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) on the other hand, believed that "learning strategies are intentional behaviour and thoughts that learners make use of during learning in order to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information" is how LLS can be defined. Despite the various definitions of LLS, the ideas that stand out in each definition is the fact that LLS are the strategies learners employ with the aim to digest the information they obtain, enabling them to recollect, regain and construct the language more successfully. It acknowledges the learners' vital role in having the autonomy in recognizing their own way of learning themselves. When learners are not aware of their own LLS, they will not gain from the lesson. Therefore, the learning process does not take place successfully which leads to non-fulfilment. This explains why some learners triumph more than other learners although the same teaching methods are applied on them and learning environment is exposed to the same group of language learners (Naiman et al., 1978; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975).

Classification of LLS
Oxford (1990) believed that LLS which can directly affect the learners would be through memory, cognitive strategy as well as compensation strategy which comprise of language usage. In contrast, indirect strategies do not comprise the language usage but gives impact to learning of language through the process. When learners keep and retrieve new information when needed, the strategy that they are employing is 'memory strategy'. Using 'memory strategy', learners create mental linkages, apply images, and sounds and they are well reviewed before action is employed. When learners process target language consciously, they learn by applying the cognitive skills when they will practise, receive and send messages, analyse the messages and give justification while creating the structure for input and output. The learners will adopt a compensation strategy when they experience a slight mental collapse in speaking or writing. Regardless of the knowledge gap, the learners would guess intelligently to overcome the limitations they face when they speak and write.

According to Oxford (1995), metacognitive, affective and social strategies are LLS which impact language learning indirectly when the learners focus, arrange, evaluate, seek for opportunities, and lower their anxiety. Learners control their own cognition when they learn using metacognitive strategies. Materials that they have obtained are overviewed, linked, organised and given attention to. 'Metacognitive strategies' also require speech production to be delayed, goals and objectives to be set, language tasks to be planned and practice opportunities to be looked for. Learners also need to self-monitor and self-evaluate under the 'metacognitive strategies. 'Affective strategies' require learners to manage their emotions and other attitudes associated with learning. Learners are also expected to self-motivate when they learn using 'affective strategies. When learners learn more effectively by interacting with others, they learn better using social strategies which require them to employ the appropriate social strategies since it involves other people. Learners need to ask questions, learn how to cooperate with others and have some empathy for others when they learn using 'social strategies'. Oxford's classification of LLS is summarised in Table 1 (Nair et al., 2021).

Table 1
Oxford's Taxonomy on LLS

Direct strategies	Indirect strategies
Cognitive strategies Compensation strategies Memory strategies	Metacognitive strategies Affective strategies Social strategies

The SILL, as developed by Oxford in order to obtain information regarding strategy use of language learners in learning English as a second language, results in the development of 62 strategies which include every strategy the learners would employ. Oxford's classification system managed to provide an instrument to identify students' present LLS although it is still in its primary stages, where further tests through practical classroom use and research need to be done.

Characteristics of Good Language Learners
Having an insight of the criteria of good language learners would help us understand the steps taken by good language learners to conquer the target language. Less successful learners can then employ the same strategies adopted by successful language learners. Rubin (1975), Stern (1975), Rubin and Thompson (1994) had come out with 14 criteria of good language learners from the aspects of personal attributes, styles, and strategies based on their observations and research studies as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Characteristics of Good Language Learners

Characteristics of Good Language Learners
1. Recognize and be consistent with their of their own way of learning,
2. Systematically arrange information about language,
3 Feel the language creatively by experimenting the grammar and vocabulary ,
4. Create opportunities to use the language both inside and outside the classroom,
5. Although understanding every word might be a problem and confusion might be felt, the talking and the listening would be continued
6. Retrieve information using memory strategies
7. Embrace errors instead of despise them
8. Linguistic knowledge, inclusive of the knowledge of the first language is applied, when learning the second language.
9. Contextual cues are used to help them understand
10. Intelligent guesses are always attempted
11. Routines of learning the language by making chunks of language as wholes in the effort to assist them perform "above their competence level" are formalised,
12. Certain common measures to keep conversations going are learned to be applied
13. Certain production strategies to close the gaps in their own competence are learned
14. Various ways of speech and writing and learn to adapt to the formality of the situation are learned

Although there was no empirical evidence, the characteristics of good language learners were created as it was observed that active learners who were involved in language learning were able to settle their own problems regarding their own learning. Wenden and Rubin (1987), found that successful language learners do not focus on only one LLS. Instead, they use a wider range of learning strategies.

Past Studies on Vocabulary Learning Strategy (VLS)
Vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) are measures taken by the EFL/ESL language learners to obtain new English words (Asgari & Mustapha, 2011). Gu (20023) had stated that one way of vocabulary learning is through differentiating between knowing a word and using a word and should be considered when choosing the right Vocabulary Learning Strategy. McCarthy (1994) highlighted that, in order to automatically apply words in a wide spectrum of language contexts, the strategy of vocabulary learning should include the ability to remember words.

The knowledge aspect on the other hand, requires more conscious and explicit learning mechanisms (Ellis, 1994). Gu (20023) also mentioned that another way to look at vocabulary learning is to view it as a process of related sub-tasks. Both cognitive and metacognitive strategies for vocabulary learning are deployed. To determine the extent to what and how well a new word is learned depends on the strategy a learner uses.

According to R Panduangkaew (2018), VLS have served a very significant role in acquiring new words. In the VLS taxonomy introduced by Schmitt's (1997), there are two main VLS which are "Discover Strategies'' where a learner discover the meaning by employing language knowledge, referring to reference materials or consulting somebody when he or she encounters a new word and "Consolidation Strategies," which describe the process by which a learner attempts to commit the target word to memory after coming across it several times beginning with the first discovery of the term as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Schmitt's VLS taxonomy

Discover Strategies	Determination Strategies (DET)
	Social Strategies (SOC)
Consolidation Strategies	Social Strategies (SOC)
	Memory Strategies (MEM)
	Cognitive Strategies (COG)
	Metacognitive Strategies (MET)

Determination Strategies (DET) is used by students when they use one or more of the following methods to try to figure out what a word means such as word groups, analysis or synthesis word parts, guessing using content and dictionary. As for **Social Strategies (SOC)** under the category of Discover Strategies are strategies when learners ask people who are in the know of the meaning of the target word: asking for L1 translation, looking for the synonym of the target word, asking for paraphrasing and asking for the ways to use the word in a sentence. **Social Strategies (SOC)** under the category of Consolidation Strategies are strategies when learners ask the teachers to check on their word lists or word cards for assurance and try to communicate as much as they can with native speakers in groups. **Memory Strategies (MEM),** frequently known as mnemonics, require learners to connect new words to be memorised with preexisting knowledge. This is often done by using imagery or grouping. **Cognitive Strategies (COG)** manipulative mental processing when learners attach the target words from the labels to the physical objects. **Metacognitive Strategies (MET)** are strategies when learners plan, think about learning, monitor and evaluate him/herself, such as studying the teacher's remarks on the written task as well as reviewing the information taken during the lesson before studying. Learners also can test themselves by attempting vocabulary tests to check on their own progress and skip a low frequency word when reading.

Past Studies on LLS Adopted by Malaysian Primary School Students

Based on research done among the Year 6 pupils in a rural primary school in Selangor in learning the English language, the most preferred LLS is from the memory strategy while social strategy is the least preferred LLS (Nair et al., 2021). Using rhymes and flashcards, acting the words out, placing the words in sentences correctly and doing revisions are the methods the pupils use to remember. Thoriq and Kurniawan (2021) had also highlighted that for drilling and reinforcement purposes, flashcards are useful for teaching vocabulary based on a study made on the First Grade of SDN Sambong 3 Batang. They can easily retain and recognize their newly-learned words (Nugroho et al.,2021).

However, a separate study done by Lim et al (2021) in Year 6 pupils of a primary school in a sub urban area in Sarawak found that the use of memory strategies is the least learning strategy employed to learn grammar. The learners probably believe that the use of flashcards or rhymes and other imagery tools are unfitting for them. Instead, the most widely used language strategies in understanding English grammar by the suburban pupils are cognitive strategies. They prefer to say or write new English words several times, talk like native English speakers, practise the sound of English, use the English words they have learned in different ways and watch TV programmes and movies spoken in English.

Methodology
Research design

Check & Schutt (2012) defined survey research as the process of gathering data from a sample of people using their replies to questions. A variety of strategies can be used for participant recruiting, data collecting, and instrumentation in this type of study. Thus, this quantitative approach that includes a survey method was used in this study, and information making use of a single instrument (online questionnaire) was gathered. The usage of language learning strategies in primary schools in Peninsular Malaysia was investigated using this tool.

Research Respondents

For this research, the respondents were chosen using purposive sampling. The purposeful selection of a participant is a component of the purposive sampling method, which is also known as judgement sampling. This non-random technique does not require underlying theories or a predetermined number of participants. In simple words, the researcher selects the necessary information to have and then searches for individuals who can and are willing to supply it due to their knowledge or experience. Thus, for this research year 6 pupils from primary schools were chosen. A total number of 100 year six primary school pupils were selected from different states of peninsular Malaysia namely Perak, Johor, Negeri Sembilan dan Melaka. There were certain criteria taken into consideration to select the respondents. The main selection criteria were the respondents' proficiency level. The pupils must have at least acquired the level of band 4 in their latest school-based assessment. This is to make sure that they understand the questions better and put in their genuine opinions.

Data Collection Method

Once the respondents were identified, they were given a brief explanation about the questionnaire. Each of them was given the link to the questionnaire and asked to answer in a conducive place. Each of the items were explained thoroughly as the respondents were answering the questions. Respondents were also given a token of appreciation for answering

the questionnaire. The data obtained were later transferred to excel spreadsheet to be analysed.

Research Instrument
The questionnaire was adapted from "The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning", (SILL), published in 1990 by Rebecca Oxford to gather some data regarding language learning strategies. 5 questions were chosen from each strategy and the questions were paraphrased according to the comprehension level of the respondents. Once the adaptation was done, two senior English teachers were consulted to make corrections and approve the questionnaire. A total number of 30 items were prepared according to 6 language learning strategies. The statements were simplified according to the respondents' level and they were asked to choose between 'Always', 'Sometimes' or 'Never'. Each option was provided with a smiley face that represents the response. This is to ensure that the respondents choose the correct option.

Table 3 below shows the number of questionnaire items according to the language learning strategies. Questionnaire items 1-5 were used to test memory strategies which consisted of statements such as *"I use rhymes to remember new second language words"* and *"I physically act out new second language words"*. Whereas questionnaire items 6-10 were focused on cognitive strategies. *"I try to talk like native second language speakers"* and *"I start conversations in second language"* were two examples of statements under cognitive strategies. Compensation strategies were included in the questionnaire items 11-15 with statements such as *"to understand unfamiliar SL words I make guesses"* and *"when I can't think of a word during a conversation in the SL, I use gestures"*. Questionnaire items 15-20 focused on metacognitive strategies. *"I pay attention when someone is speaking SL"* and *"I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study SL"* were two examples of statements under metacognitive strategies. The affective strategies were included in questionnaire items 21-25 with statements such as *"I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using SL"* and *"I encourage myself to speak SL even when I am afraid of making a mistake"*. The final 5 questionnaire items emphasized on social strategies. *"I ask SL speakers to correct me when I talk"* and *"If I do not understand something in SL, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again"* were the two examples of statements under social strategy.

Table 3
Description for each part of the questionnaire

Questions	Description
Question 1-5	Memory Strategies
Question 6-10	Cognitive Strategies
Question 11-15	Compensation Strategies
Question 15-20	Metacognitive Strategies
Question 21-25	Affective Strategies
Question 16-30	Social Strategies

Findings and Discussion

The strategies used by the respondents to learn English vocabulary are shown in the tables below. The results are divided into three categories: "Always," "Sometimes," and "Never." The sections that follow demonstrate how frequently respondents used different techniques to learn vocabulary in English. A modified version of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning questionnaire was used to collect data for the study.

Table 4
The respondents have used memory strategies for learning English vocabulary

No.	Effective Strategies	Always % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Never % (n)
MEM1	Rhymes help me learn SL words.	18.0% (18)	58.0% (58)	24.0% (24)
MEM2	I act out new SL words to help me remember them.	19.0% (19)	70.0% (70)	11.0% (11)
MEM3	I use flashcards to remember new SL words.	33.0% (33)	48.0% (48)	19.0% (19)
MEM4	I practise using new SL words in my sentences to remember them	19.0% (19)	57.0% (57)	24.0% (24)
MEM5	I visualise a scene to recall a new SL term.	28.0% (28)	47.0% (47)	25.0% (25)
	Total	**23.4%**	**56.0%**	**20.6%**

Table 4 the memory strategy technique depicts, respondents sometimes utilise to learn English, is by physically acting out using new words, which accounts for 70.0% of the total. On the contrary, only 19.0% respondents frequently use this method to learn the language. However, 11.0% of the respondents selected 'never' to this strategy to learn new words in English. The highest percentage 33% in the 'Always' group reveals that the most effective strategy to learn new English words is through remembering flashcards. Conversely, 19.0% of respondents never utilise this method at all, whereas the majority of the respondents only do so sometimes. Another option used by the respondents is using new English words in a sentence to remind them that 19.0% 'always' and 57.0% 'Sometimes' respectively. Additionally, 28.0% of the respondents always prefer to create a mental image of how to use a new phrase and to remember it as an approach. Meanwhile, 47.0% sometimes use this technique.

Table 5
The cognitive strategies used by the respondents to gain English vocabulary

No.	Effective Strategies	Always % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Never % (n)
COG6	I use English terms several times in my speech and writing.	13.0% (13)	59.0% (59)	28.0% (28)
COG7	I try to imitate native speakers.	29.0% (29)	55.0% (65)	16.0% (16)
COG8	I start conversations in English.	27.0% (27)	52.0% (52)	21.0% (21)
COG9	I watch SL TV shows or I opt for English movies .	21.0% (21)	54.0% (54)	25.0% (25)
COG10	I enjoy reading anything written in English.	16.0% (16)	68.0% (68)	16.0% (16)
	Total	**21.2%**	**57.6%**	**21.2%**

Table 5 displays the respondents' use of various cognitive strategies in learning the English language. The majority of respondents (68) find that reading materials written in English for pleasure to be the ideal way to learn the language and feel that this is the technique that is most successful for doing so. Conversely, the interesting fact proved here is that 16 respondents 'always' read English language materials and similarly 16 respondents 'never' use this as a technique to learn the language. Briefly, both share the same percentage 21.0% respectively. To illustrate the strategy practised by the respondents from the 'Always' and 'Sometimes' group on uttering and writing new English words several times 13.0% and 59.0% respectively, apparently indicate a significant difference of 46%. Despite the fact that 27.0% of respondents 'Always' prefer to start conversations using the English language as an approach, 21.0% 'Never' want to use this method. Consequently, the significance of the difference is just 6.0%. Furthermore, 55.0% of the respondents sometimes try to speak like native speakers.

Table 6

The respondents have utilised compensation strategies for learning the vocabulary.

No.	Effective Strategies	Always % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Never % (n)
COM11	I make guesses to understand difficult SL words	18.0% (18)	58.0% (58)	24.0% (24)
COM12	When I can't think of a word to say during a SL chat, I use gestures.	21.0% (21)	54.0% (54)	25.0% (25)
COM13	If I don't know the right words in SL, I make up new ones.	24.0% (24)	55.0% (55)	21.0% (21)
COM14	I don't check every new word as I read SL.	30.0% (30)	53.0% (53)	17.0% (17)
COM15	I attempt to make sense of what the other person will say next in the SL.	25.0% (25)	59.0% (59)	16.0% (16)
	Total	**23.6%**	**55.8%**	**20.6%**

Compensation strategies used by respondents are shown in Table 6 clearly. The highest percentage which is 59.0% of the respondents, sometimes attempt to make sense of what the other person will say next in the SL. On the contrary, 16.0% never want to use this option to learn the language. Apparently, 58.0% respondents like to make guesses to understand difficult SL words in English and 18.0% use this method always to learn the words in English. Alternatively, 54.0% of respondents said they sometimes use gestures when they don't comprehend the words or the context of a conversation. Respondents from the 'Always' and 'Never' group use compensation strategies to learn vocabulary by making up new words when they run out of words. This clearly shows the substantial differences of just 3.0% which is 24.0% and 21.0% respectively. 53.0% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes just read English language texts without looking up every new word as an alternate learning strategy.

Table 7
The usage of metacognitive strategies by the respondents to learn vocabulary

No.	Effective Strategies	Always % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Never % (n)
META16	I pay attention when a person is talking in SL.	13.0% (13)	51.0% (51)	36.0% (28)
META17	I attempt to discover methods for improving my abilities in learning SL	9.0% (9)	51.0% (51)	40.0% (40)
META18	I effectively organise my timetable to ensure ample time for studying SL.	23.0% (23)	56.0% (56)	21.0% (21)
META19	I seek individuals with whom I can engage in dialogue using SL	21.0% (21)	53.0% (53)	26.0% (26)
META20	I actively seek out opportunities to engage in extensive reading within the SL context.	15.0% (16)	56.0% (54)	29.0% (16)
	Total	**16.2%**	**53.4%**	**30.4%**

Table 7 depicts the utilisation of metacognitive strategies used by the respondents.
Based on the data discovered, the highest percentage (56.0%) of the respondents choose to plan their time to spend effectively to study English language. Likewise, the same percentage of respondents seek for opportunities to read English materials as much as possible to learn the language. Meanwhile, the lowest possible response rate, 9.0%, chose to find out how to improve their ability in terms of learning the language. Yet, 40.0% of the respondents selected 'Never' for this option. However, 51.0% respondents sometimes opt out for the same strategy for learning the language. Although, another 51.0% choose to pay attention when a person is talking in English to acquire the language and the vocabulary, 36.0% never want to choose this as an option to learn the language. Even so, (53.0%) respondents seek individuals with whom they can engage in a dialogue using SL

Table 8
The usage of affective strategies by the respondents to learn English vocabulary

No.	Effective Strategies	Always % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Never % (n)
AFF21	When I'm nervous about using SL, I attempt to relax.	18.0% (18)	57.0% (57)	25.0% (25)
AFF22	Even when I am worried about making a mistake, I urge myself to speak SL.	16.0% (16)	62.0% (62)	22.0% (22)
AFF23	When I achieve my objective in SL, I treat myself.	28.0% (28)	43.0% (43)	29.0% (29)
AFF24	I realise if I'm stressed or nervous when studying or using SL.	16.0% (16)	56.0% (56)	28.0% (28)
AFF25	I record my feelings and emotions in my language learning notebook.	35.0% (35)	50.0% (50)	15.0% (15)
	Total	**22.6%**	**53.6%**	**23.8%**

Table 8 demonstrates the employment of effective strategies by the respondents. 57.0% of respondents believe it would be wise to maintain their calmness or relaxation if they experience language anxiety when speaking in English. However, 25.0% never think that this can be of any benefit to them. Despite their fear of making a mistake,16.0% of the respondents motivate themselves to talk in English, however 62.0% choose to apply this method sometimes. Meanwhile, the percentage of respondents who always reward themselves if they do well in English is 28.0%, followed by the percentage of respondents who reward themselves when they achieve anything in learning the language, which is 43.0%. Most likely, when learning English, 56.0% of respondents report that they sometimes feel as though they are frequently feeling tense and uncomfortable, while 16.0% always feel the same. Another fact that can be analysed here is that 35.0% always write down their feelings in a language learning diary and 50.0% choose to do this merely sometimes. 15.0% of the respondents are not at all interested in this approach to learning the language.

Table 9
The respondents used social strategies to learn English vocabulary

No.	Effective Strategies	Always % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Never % (n)
SOCI26	If I do not understand something in SL, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.	9.0% (9)	59.0% (59)	32.0% (32)
SOCI27	I ask SL teachers to correct me when I talk.	17.0% (17)	56.0% (56)	27.0% (27)
SOCI28	I engage in practice with other fellow students.	22.0% (22)	53.0% (53)	25.0% (25)
SOCI29	I seek assistance from SL speakers.	22.0% (22)	51.0% (51)	27.0% (27)
SOCI30	I ask questions to SL speakers.	19.0% (19)	55.0% (55)	26.0% (26)
	Total	**17.8%**	**54.8%**	**27.4%**

The social strategies that the respondents used are displayed in the above table. Only 9.0% of respondents utilise this strategy consistently; 59.0% sometimes want individuals to lower their pace and redo the steps if they do not comprehend the language. In addition, 56 respondents, or 56.0%, said they occasionally ask their English instructors for help, and another 53 respondents, or 53.0%, said they occasionally practice speaking English with other students. Apart from that, 55.0% of the respondents sometimes approach SL speakers by throwing questions to them while 26.0% never use this as an approach to acquire the language. As for the 'Never' group, respondents show that only 27.4% used all the strategies in the category of social strategy. The 'Sometimes' group, however, displays a 54.8% usage rate for the social strategy.

The primary focus of the study was to investigate the Year 6 learners from urban schools towards their most preferred and least preferred LLS in learning vocabulary. The collected data analysis from the responses were analysed to answer the two research questions which stated as below

Research Question 1

Which language learning strategies (LLS) is the most preferred by the Year 6 sub-urban learners in learning vocabulary?

Based on the data collected from the questionnaire, there are two language learning strategies which are used the most by the pupils. The compensation strategy with 23.6% followed by the memory strategy with 23.4%. The compensation strategy entails the following (1) To understand unfamiliar SL words, I make guesses, (2) When I can't think of a word during a conversation in SL, I use gestures, (3) I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in SL, (4) I read SL without looking up every new word, (5) I try to guess what the other person will say next in the SL.

Oxford (1990) graded language using both direct and indirect language techniques. The technique of directly learning a language makes up direct tactics. Without prompt engagement, indirect techniques enable an indirect learning strategy. Direct techniques are categorised as being related to memory, cognitive, and compensation. Compensation strategies consist of action leading to intelligent guessing, overcoming, and publishing limits (Gumartifa & Agustiani, 2020). Under the compensation strategy the most agreed statement is 'I read SL without looking up every new word.'

Learners this century are well exposed to vocabularies at a very young age especially learners from urban areas. Learners prefer to explore the meaning of a word in context rather than the meaning of the word by itself. Edi Wahyono (2019) reports that he discovered that the majority of students typically employ four cognitive readings (1. Read the material quickly to grasp the essential ideas, 2. Infer the words' meanings from the context. 3. Write down the key points of the text, 4. Incorporate background information about the topic within the text. The use of a balanced dictionary is actually advised, according to Anderson (1991), as it is necessary to look up the terms that are crucial and avoid the others that do not appear to impede comprehension.

Research Question 2

Which language learning strategies (LLS) is the least preferred by the Year 6 sub-urban learners in learning vocabulary?

Based on the data collected from the questionnaire, metacognitive learning strategies was the least preferred by the respondents with 16.2% perceived this strategy positively by answering 'Always' using this strategy in learning vocabulary. About 53.4% of the learners used this strategy 'sometimes' meanwhile 30.4% of the respondents never used this strategy in learning vocabulary. There were five questionnaire items been assessed for the respondents which consisted of ; 1) I pay attention when someone is speaking SL , 2) I try to find out how to be a better learner of SL, 3) I plan my schedule so i will have enough time to study SL , 4) I look for people I can talk to in SL and 5) I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in SL. These five items were categorised under the metacognitive strategies.

Differs from the memory and compensation strategy, this particular metacognitive learning strategies least preferred by the young learners. This could be due to the lack of being independent learners which required them to have the capability of self-directed learning. Metacognitive strategies was the most preferred LLS among the ESL graduates (Soupi et al., 2021). Similarly, Adan and Hashim (2021) study indicated that metacognitive strategies was

the most preferred strategies to be used among the upper secondary learners. These studies showed that adult learners preferred metacognitive strategies compared to the young learners. Metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies are two language learning strategies commonly utilised by the learners which allows them to effectively plan, monitor and assess their own progress (Soupi et al., 2021). Metacognitive strategies perceived as the learners need to discover the learning by themselves with little support.

A study conducted by Sapoevna (2023) revealed that teaching vocabulary for young learners is an essential aspect in which the teachers need to utilize various interesting techniques for teaching vocabularies. There are two parts teachers need to consider in teaching vocabulary; i) introduce new words by miming or flashcards and ii) practise the learned words by engaging the learners with vocabulary activities. Therefore, teachers should play a vital role by facilitating the learners in the vocabulary learning process by providing sufficient guidance and support for them. Providing an essential guide for the primary school learners will help them to learn and grasp the new word effectively.

Every question's interpretation reveals the participants' attitudes towards the approach inventory for language learning, whether they are supportive, critical, or neutral. The study's findings indicate that the majority of pupils do not employ learning techniques for SL learning. Furthermore, if they employ any tactics, they are completely unaware of them. Besides that, men and women have different ways of learning when it comes to strategy inventory for SL learning as reflected in a study conducted to analyse the current practices of SL learners and their individual differences in this particular field (Mohammadi, 2014). Yet, there aren't any real distinctions between them.

Besides that, there are numerous techniques that can be used to improve the application of SL learning tactics (Montaño-González,2017). Similarly in our study, the researchers questioned pupils from different classes, different backgrounds and different proficiency levels to discover more about the methods they use to improve their capacity for learning. According to the ratio of the study's findings, it is evident that the majority of respondents concur with our assertions and that some respondents believe what they were asked to be somewhat true. There may be several causes for the ignorance of SL learning methodologies. In other words, the pupils also get fewer opportunities to acquire the language. The teachers' lack of exposure to these approaches from the beginning of students' SL learning is essentially their limitation. However, not knowing about these techniques makes learning or using a second language much more difficult. The learners themselves are a secondary important factor. They are enthusiastic about learning English but do not put it into practice.

Conclusion

This research aimed to explore and identify the most and least preferred Language Learning Strategies (LLS) used by the Year 6 sub-urban ESL learners in learning vocabulary. The findings revealed that there were two LLS as the learners' most preferred LLS which were compensation strategies and memory strategies. Conversely, metacognitive strategies were the least preferred by the learners in learning vocabulary. These findings actually serve as a good insight for the ESL teachers to identify their students' preferred LLS in learning vocabulary. As vocabulary is a crucial language component in English, utilising LLS can act as a catalyst to boost the students' motivation to learn, explore and grasp vocabulary easily.

In the current 21st century learning, the teacher's role as facilitator is heavily emphasised in producing competent learners. Hence, the ESL teachers in primary schools should vary the

vocabulary teaching practices which can cater the need to meet the requirements of the current trends in teaching vocabularies. Teachers can explore and use various available teaching materials which can assist them in vocabulary teaching for the young learners according to their most preferred LLS. Providing interesting learning activities based on their preferred LLS enables the young learners to enhance their motivation and interest in learning vocabulary hence it helps in their vocabulary mastery effectively.

As mentioned by Gao (2004), we are conscious that the questionnaire that we have designed would not be able to identify the multidimensionality of learners' strategy use. It is reasonable to deduce that the survey results were affected by the nonappearance of any previous strategy-based order in the landscape of investigated English for specific purposes.

Thus, we advise that any further research into LLS be preceded by studies to ascertain the specifics of the situation. The research might initially be informed by an English proficiency exam on students' language skills; learning English language requirements analysis and demographic variables analysis could create a foundation for additional SLLS research on strategy education and application.

In a nutshell, second language learners should make an effort to become aware of the various language learning methods as mentioned by Chamot (2011). If they want to become proficient speakers and writers of SL, they must put in a lot of effort and hard work while practising the new language learning techniques where they can seek the appropriate advice from the knowledgeable teachers. Apart from that, the teachers also must be occupied with adequate knowledge on SL which can guide the pupils well in future.

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