

Analyzing the Use of Language Learning Strategies among High and Low Achievers

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Language learning strategies assist English as Second Language (ESL) students to enhance their learning abilities effectively. The study aimed at identifying language learning strategies used by ESL postgraduate students using Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The target population was MA in English Literature/Linguistics and Master of Philosophy in English Literature/Linguistics students in Pakistan. A sample consisting of 300 ESL students was selected by using purposive sampling technique. A questionnaire consisting of language learning strategies developed by the researchers was used for gathering data. SPSS was used to analyze the data. The findings, based on the quantitative analysis of data, revealed that the ESL students use comprehension and meta-cognitive strategies as compared to other strategies. It was found that females used more language learning strategies as compared to their male counterparts. Moreover, high achievers were reported high strategy users, which means that more use of language strategies can result in high academic achievement of students. In view of this, the researchers suggested a productive means of language learning strategies to enhance their academic performance.

Keywords: *English language, language learning strategies, language learning*

Introduction

Pakistan is a multilingual country where 72 languages are spoken (Mansoor, 2004). Five major languages (e.g., Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Saraiki and Balochi) apart from Urdu and English are spoken in the country (Rahman, 2006). Urdu is not only considered the national language (spoken by only 7.57% of Pakistanis) but also known as lingua franca while the English language enjoys the status of official language in Pakistan (Lewis, Simons, & Fennig 2009, Mansoor, 2004). Despite the fact that English is taught as a compulsory subject from Nursery to university level classes, the students express a severe deficiency in English. Altaf (2016) and Amna (2017) reported that the 2016 performance of candidates in Central Superior Services

(CSS) Examination was unsatisfactory in the subject of English particularly in writing. Where the majority of the candidates 7841 (81%) of 9673 candidates failed in the English test. With reference to the observations from examiners on the disappointing performance of candidates in the CSS exams, candidates' essays were based on illogical arguments, reasoning, and research-based facts. They were void of coherence, cohesion and creativity. In addition, the candidates' ability to précis writing was poor. The majority of the candidates 8894 (92%) failed in writing appropriate précis. They lacked command over vocabulary, syntax, phraseology or the etymology of words. These results are clear indicators of a falling standard of education, especially in the subject of English. Finally,

the examiners gave strong recommendations to the institutions of higher education to take appropriate measures to enhance students' English language proficiency. In view of the situation, the current research aimed to find out ESL students' level of using strategies for language learning as a means to probe the reasons for falling to the English language fruitfully.

Various assessment instruments such as surveys, interviews, observations, self-report exist to identify language strategies employed by ESL learners. According to Oxford (1990) and Cohen and Scott (1996), each instrument has its pros and cons as well. The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) is the most widely used survey technique and it has been translated into more than 20 languages and used in hundreds of research studies all over the world. Therefore, SILL was used to identify and compare strategies amongst high achievers' and low achievers' use of strategies. The history of using strategies for language learning dates back to the late 20th century.

Researchers (e.g., Hosenfeld; 1976; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975) worked on the initial concept of using strategies for language learning. Then during the 1980s, Chamot, (1987), O'Malley et al., (1985), Wenden and Rubin (1987) gave the concept of strategy. During the 1990s, some researchers (e.g., Cohen, 1998; Oxford, 1990, 1996) worked on the use of strategies for language learning and confirmatory factor analysis. With the passage of time, the strategy concept captured the attention of the researchers (e.g., Cohen, 2011; Cohen & Macaro, 2007; Griffiths, 2008, 2013;

Oxford, 2011) which shows the vibrant interest and continued research activities in this area. Numerous attempts have been made to define strategies. Rubin (1975) suggests strategies are "the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge" (p. 43). O'Malley et al. (1985) define strategies as systematic procedures that facilitate learners to boost up their acquisition level, retention rate, retrieval capability, and performance echelon. This definition was based on Rigney's (1978) definition of strategies for language learning. Oxford (1990) states that "specific actions were taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (p.8)." Some writers used conflicting terminologies such as *tactics* (Seliger, 1984), *learning behaviours* (Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Wesche, 1977), and *techniques* (Stern, 1992), which were used interchangeably with the term strategy as used frequently for enhancing the level of learning.

Strategies for language learning are classified in different ways. Rubin (1981) categorized strategies into two groups, namely, direct and indirect, while O'Malley et al. (1985) classified into three categories such as cognitive, meta-cognitive, and social. Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was further subdivided into six categories: cognitive, memory, compensation, meta-cognitive, social and effective which align with Rubin's direct/indirect dichotomy. She classified language learning strategies into four categories, namely, cognitive, affective, socio-cultural-interactive, and meta-

strategies. These categories are not limited to meta-cognitive strategies” (Oxford, 2011). It is an interesting fact that the three strategy categories (cognitive, meta-cognitive, and resource management) were recommended by Pintrich and Garcia (1991) and a tripartite model (comprehension, storage, and using) was again used by Purpura (1999). Yang (1999) formed a six-factor model (cognitive-memory, functional practice, meta-cognitive, social, formal-oral, and compensation), while Schmidt and Watanabe (2001) included only four factors (cognitive, study, social and coping). On the other hand, Cohen, Oxford, and Chi (2003) classified their Language Strategy Use Inventory in line with language skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Some of the researchers such as LoCastro (1994) Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) Ellis (1994, 2008) and Oxford and Cohen (1992) criticized various classification systems. In addition, Woodrow (2005) states that group strategies are “fraught with contradictions (p. 91). According to Rivera-Mills and Plonsky (2007, p. 536), “there is no consensus” regarding the categorization of strategy (p. 536). In this controversial situation, Griffiths (2008, 2013) advised categorizing strategies in line with post hoc thematic analyses instead of making a priori strategy classification which is the current practical solution.

The relation between Strategies and Proficiency

Previous studies demonstrate that there is a remarkable relationship between using strategies and academic proficiency. For instance, Porte (1988) found that low achievers used many strategies such as

activating prior knowledge, developing cues when storing information and making associations between new and old material; however, they were not employed suitably. Similarly, Vann and Abraham (1990) concluded that unsuccessful learners employed an array of strategies though they were not used effectively. Contrarily, Gardner, Tremblay, and Masgoret, (1997) found a negative relationship between employing strategy and students’ achievement. Nonetheless, their sample comprised of advanced learners who did not need using a large range of strategies. Conversely, Green and Oxford (1995) found that high achievers employed all types of strategies frequently in a comparison to low-achievers. Dreyer and Oxford (1996) found a significant positive relationship between the frequency of using strategies and successful learners while Park (1997) found a positive correlation between frequent uses of strategies amongst high achievers. Griffiths (2003) found that high achievers and low achievers used language strategies at equal rates. Kyungsim and Leavell (2006) revealed that the more the students use strategies the higher they made their progress. In summary, previous studies found a significant positive correlation between using strategies and high achievement.

Factors Influencing Strategy Choice

A number of factors, directly and indirectly, affect strategy choice made by students. Willing (1987) suggests, any training process to develop learning strategies has to take all such factors into consideration. They can be classified into different categories. Learners’ selection of

strategies is based on different personality traits such as active versus passive and/or introvert versus extrovert (Zafar & Meenakshi, 2011). Learners' motivational level affects students' selection of language strategies. Highly motivated students show a positive attitude toward using language strategies as compared to low motivated students (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). Students' expectations and their purpose for learning a language play a vital role in selecting language strategies (Rodriguez, 2009). Lai (2009) reported a significant difference between male and female learners for applying language-learning strategies. He concluded that female students have a different use of language strategies as compared to their male counterparts. Task requirement is another vital factor in the selection of strategies. Norton and Toohey (2001) reported that learners use a large number of language strategies with complex tasks and vice versa. Ethnographic studies carried out by Denzin and Lincoln (2008) noted that language learning strategies are bound by the ethno-cultural background of students. A study carried out by Bain, Scott, and Steinberg (2004) revealed that adults applied a different pattern of language strategies as compared to youngsters. Teachers' instructions and expectations are also deciding factors for students in the selection of language strategy use. Teachers' concerns force students to use an array of language strategies. The stage of learning also affects the use of strategies. Gu (2003) and Wharton (2000) concluded that advanced learners have a tendency to use effective and a wide range of strategies as compared to lower level students.

Furthermore, students' manners in which they employ language strategies matter. Consequently, learners' cognitive style changes their choice of language strategies.

Positive Outcomes of Strategy Use

The appropriate utilization of strategies results in better proficiency and achievement in language (Pressley & Associates, 1990). Previous studies have repeatedly revealed a significant relationship between using strategies and students' performance. There is a remarkable association between using strategies and obtaining a high level of proficiency (Zimmerman & Pons, 1986). Some studies (e.g., Li, & Zhu, 2017; Rubin, 1975) carried out in the arena of Second Language (L2) revealed that determined learners consistently employ language strategies such as figuring out the meanings of unknown and difficult words from contextual clues. It was also found that high achievers do not always use a single set of strategies. However, according to Abraham and Vann (1987), Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins (1996), low achievers employ strategies in an unconnected, casual and uncontrolled manner while high achievers employ language strategies in the relevant and systematic way. Nunan (1991) reported that high achievers differ from low achievers in applying strategies during language learning processes. Similarly, Green and Oxford (1995) found that efficient students used more strategies as compared to less efficient students. They also commented that learners in a second language setting and conducive environment used multifarious strategies. Green and Oxford (1995) also revealed that English as a Second Language

(ESL) learners employed more varied strategies as compared to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners.

Strategy Instruction Research

For enhancing ESL/EFL students' proficiency, some researchers provided useful instructions, which assisted them to employ more powerful and more relevant learning strategies. Previous studies (e.g. Dadour & Robbins, 1996; O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Küpper, Russo, 1985; Park-Oh, 1994) found that strategy instruction puts a positive effect on increasing proficiency in speaking and reading. However, the results of a study conducted by O'Malley et al. (1985) were not significant for language listening skills. Cohen, Weaver, and Yi, (1995) Chamot et al. (1996) and Cohen (2000) carried out studies to investigate the various effects of using strategies and found that there was a significant effect of strategy instruction on students' performance. Nunan (1997) found that strategy instruction successfully affects in enhancing EFL learners' motivation.

Categories of L2 Learning Strategies

Oxford (1990) categorized L2 learning strategies into different groups while O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and others offered alternative taxonomies such as cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies. Cognitive strategies assist language learners to comprehend and grasp diverse texts through different techniques e.g., via analyzing, outlining, summarizing, reasoning, synthesizing, note-taking, practising in naturalistic settings, recalling and reorganizing information to build up well-built schemas and reformulating structures and sound systems.

Cognitive strategies are drastically significant to increase L2 learners' proficiency and exposure of native English speakers (Kato, 1996; Ku, 1995; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995; Oxford, Judd, & Giesen, 1998; Park, 1994). Meta-cognitive strategies such as to identify one's own style of learning and requirements, gather and organize materials, plan for an L2 task, manage miscellaneous activities, evaluate one's own performance, monitor mistakes and evaluate learning activities are used for managing the process of learning on the whole. In connection with the effectiveness of meta-cognitive strategies, Purpura (1999) concludes that meta-cognitive strategies have a constructive, undeviating, significant effect on the use of cognitive strategy and completion of any task. According to Dreyer and Oxford (1996), Oxford, Judd, and Giesen (1998), meta-cognitive strategies are strong predictors to judge the proficiency of L2 learners.

As far as strategies related to memory are concerned, they assist students to create a connection between L2 items with another; however, they do not involve deep understanding to a great extent. Oxford (1990) claims that strategies related to memory help students learn and recall information while others rote and retrieve via the sound system and the mental image, an amalgamation of images and sounds, body movement, mechanical means via flashcards. Oxford and Ehrman (1995) concluded that memory-related strategies are helpful to memorize a large number of characters of any language and to design courses for native speakers of the English language. Nevertheless, strategies related to

memory do not significantly relate to L2 expertise. As a matter of fact, memory-related strategies yielded a remarkable negative relationship between learners' vocabulary and test performance and grammar since these strategies are generally employed to rote vocabulary and structure at initial stages of learning language and the use of such types of strategies is reduced after having grasped a sufficient amount of structure and vocabulary (Purpura, 1997). As regards the utilization of compensatory strategies, they assist learners in redressing for missing information or knowledge. Various compensatory strategies are used namely using synonyms, figuring out the meanings of difficult words from the contextual clues in understanding receptive skills (listening and reading), retrieving the missing information to support writing and speaking skills and using pause words and gestures, particularly for speaking skills. According to Cohen (1998), compensatory strategies are employed for developing productive skills, however, they are supposed to be used for learning language instead of learning strategies. Nonetheless, any kinds of compensation strategies even though they are small in number support learners in learning a language (Little, 1991; Oxford, 1990, 1999a, 1999b).

In connection with effective strategies, they are significantly related to L2 proficiency. Affective strategies assist the learner to identify his/her mood and anxiety level, appreciate on demonstrating admirable performance and talking about self-talk and feelings (Dreyer & Oxford, 1996; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995). On the other hand, Mullins (1992) found a negative

link between effective strategies with some measures of L2 proficiency. One of the strong reasons for the negative link is that some of the students who make progress toward proficiency, they no longer necessitate the use of effective strategies. In addition, probably, students' use of meta-cognitive strategies is linked with the proficiency of L2 and with the passage of time; the use of effective strategies becomes scarce as the learner is designated as a high achiever.

Social strategies such as inquiring for amplification regarding a puzzling point, verifying in a perplexing situation, communicating with a native speaker, requesting for support in accomplishing a language assignment and exploring social and cultural norms are significant. Such strategies assist learners in understanding the target language and culture as well while communicating with others. Dreyer and Oxford (1996) reported that the use of social strategies was significantly associated with EFL learners' proficiency. Similarly, Oxford and Ehrman (1995) investigated that social strategies support native-English-speaking foreign language learners.

Research Objectives

The current study aimed to find out the language learning strategies for postgraduate students at university level used. In this respect, the following research objectives were formulated for the current study:

1. To find out language learning strategies used by high achievers' at the university level

2. To find out language learning strategies used by low achievers' at the university level
3. To make a comparison of language learning strategies used by high achievers and low achievers at the university level
4. To make a comparison of language learning strategies used by male and female postgraduates at the university level

Participants and Sampling

Two hundred male (67%) and 100 female (33%) students pursuing Masters in English literature/linguistics and Master of Philosophy from a public (The Islamia University of Bahawalpur) and a private university (University of Lahore) were purposively sampled for the study, and consisted of about equal number of students from four semesters (1-4) of their graduate program.

Research Instrument

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was designed to gather quantitative data. A great assistance was sort from Oxford (1990) in the construction

of the questionnaire. SILL consisted of seven categories of Language learning strategies (LLS) namely; memory strategies (32 items), cognitive strategies (39 items), comprehension strategies (17 items), meta-cognitive strategies (18 items), compensatory strategies (8 items), social strategies (12 items), and effective strategies (8 items). The questionnaire comprising of 134 items was validated in the light of three language experts' constructive opinions. Cronbach's Alpha value of the instrument was 0.87 that indicates high reliability. As far as the administration of research instrument was concerned, the questionnaire was personally administered to the respondents in groups.

Results

To identify LLS used by students, the data were analyzed by using SPSS. As far as the analysis of the data was concerned, inferential and descriptive statistical techniques were used. In connection with the research objective 1-2, the results of the study are interpreted as follows:

Table 1

Variability in low achievers and high achievers in language learning strategies

Language learning strategies	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				Descriptive				
	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig. Value</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>d.f</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>Std. Error Difference</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
								<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
Memory Strategies	7.028	0.013	-15.47	198	.000	-2.25375	0.1495	-2.5485	-1.9590
Cognitive Strategies	6.511	0.013	-10.75	198	.000	-1.9100	0.1776	-2.2603	-1.5596
Comprehension Strategies	7.126	0.009	-10.57	198	.000	-1.8512	0.1750	-2.1964	-1.5060
Meta-cognitive Strategies	6.342	0.014	-10.43	198	.000	-1.8237	0.1747	-2.1683	-1.4791
Compensatory	8.518	0.004	-10.69	198	.000	-1.8850	0.1762	-2.2326	-1.5374

Strategies									
Social Strategies	8.099	0.006	-11.136	198	.000	-1.9025	0.1715	-2.2409	-1.5640
Affective Strategies	7.459	0.008	-11.736	198	.000	-1.9187	0.1653	-2.2448	-1.5926

Table 1 indicates that means are not equal to low achievers and high achievers in language learning strategies. Calculated T values indicate a significant difference between the strategies used by low achievers and high achievers. Table 2 shows the use of LLS by the postgraduate students. Mean values indicate that the students employed comprehension and meta-cognitive

strategies more than other strategies, i.e. cognitive strategies, memory strategies, comprehension strategies, effective strategies and social strategies. In order to achieve the research objective 2, a comparison of language learning strategies used by high achievers and low achievers at the university level was made.

Table 2

Use of language learning strategies by university students

<i>Language Learning Strategies</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Memory Strategies	3.3851		.02246	.60259
Cognitive Strategies	3.3626		.02301	.61745
Comprehension Strategies	3.5138		.02712	.72309
Meta-Cognitive Strategies	3.5241		.02450	.65322
Compensatory Strategies	3.4106		.02750	.73327
Social Strategies	3.3937		.02425	.64663
Affective Strategies	3.3527		.02576	.68696

Table 3

Use of memory strategies by high and low achievers

Dependent Variable	(I) CGPA in Previous Semester	(J) CGPA in Previous Semester	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Memory Strategies	3.00-3.50	Less than 3.00	.13107*	.05180	.012
	More than 3.50	More than 3.50	.04296	.07943	.589
		Less than 3.00	.08810	.07774	.258

Table 3 represents the use of memory strategies among high and low achievers. Value of mean difference depicts that the students with 3.00 to 3.50 CGPA, used more memory strategies than the achievers of less than 3.00 CGPA. The difference was significant at 0.05 level. Though achievers

of 3.00 to 3.50 CGPA employed memory strategies comparatively more than high achievers (who got more than 3.50 CGPA), however, the difference was not significant. Results of use of memory strategies among high and low achievers are shown also in Figure 1.

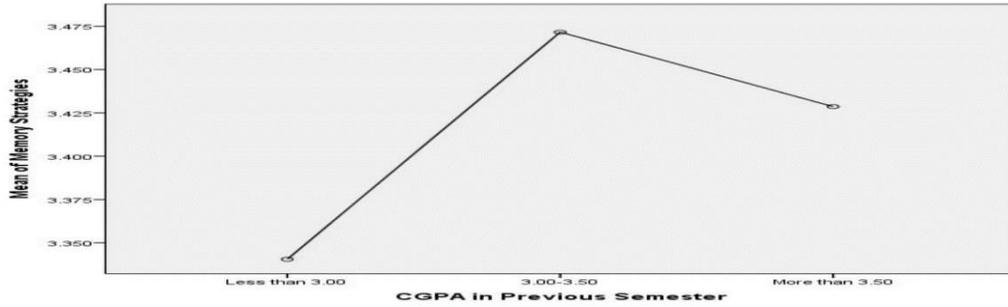


Figure 1 Use of memory strategies among high and low achievers

Table 4

Use of cognitive strategies by high and low achievers

Dependent Variable	(I) CGPA in Previous Semester	(J) CGPA in Previous Semester	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Cognitive Strategies	3.00-3.50	Less than 3.00	.11799*	.05141	.022
	More than 3.50	Less than 3.00	.12783	.07716	.098
		3.00-3.50	.00985	.07884	.901

Table 4 shows the difference in the use of cognitive strategies among high and low academic achievers. It can be concluded from mean differences that the students, who got 3.00-3.50 CGPA, used cognitive strategies significantly more than those who obtained 3.00 CGPA. Moreover, students

with more than 3.50 CGPA used cognitive strategies comparatively higher than low achievers. However, the difference was not significant. Findings regarding the usage of cognitive strategies are graphically represented in Figure 2.

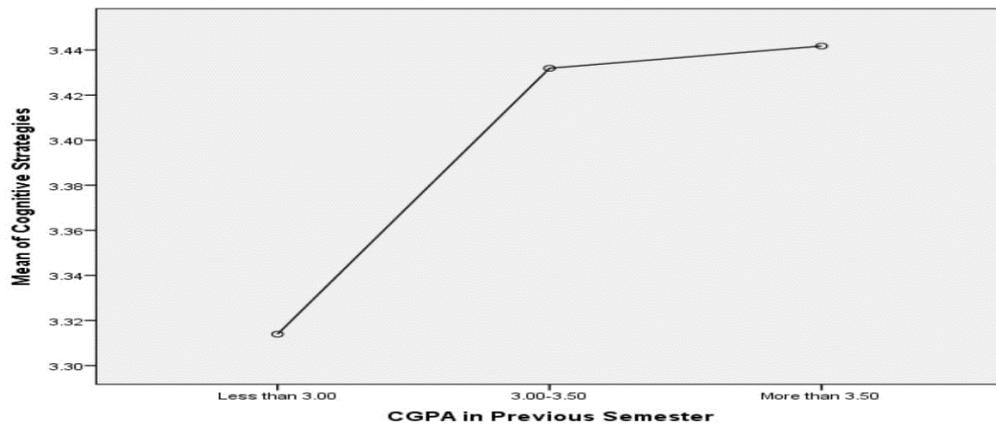


Figure 2 Use of cognitive strategies among high and low achievers

Table 5

Use of comprehension strategies by high and low achievers

Dependent Variable	(I) CGPA in Previous Semester	(J) CGPA in Previous Semester	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
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Comprehension Strategies	3.00-3.50	Less than 3.00	.21000*	.06200	.001
		More than 3.50	.02734	.09636	.777
	More than 3.50	Less than 3.00	.18266*	.09447	.044

Table 5 indicates a difference in use of comprehension strategies among high and low achievers. A mean difference of students with less than 3.00 CGPA was significant than that of the students with more than 3.00 CGPA. It shows that high

achievers used comparatively more comprehension strategies during the language learning than their low achiever counterparts. Figure 3 illuminates findings of comprehension strategies graphically.

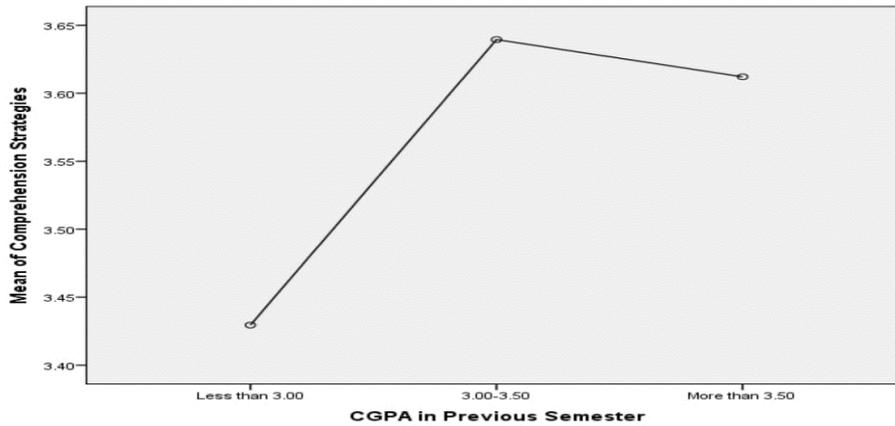


Figure 3 Use of comprehension strategies among high and low achievers

Table 6

Use of meta-cognitive strategies by high and low achievers

Dependent Variable	(I) CGPA in Previous Semester	(J) CGPA in Previous Semester	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Meta-Cognitive Strategies	3.00-3.50	Less than 3.00	.11675*	.05664	.040
		More than 3.50	.08469	.08803	.336
	More than 3.50	Less than 3.00	.03206	.08631	.710

In Table 6, a mean difference of meta-cognitive strategies used by high and low achievers is shown. It is evident that students, who achieved 3.00-3.50 CGPA, were comparatively higher in using meta-cognitive strategies than those who got less

than 3.00 CGPA and more than 3.50 CGPA. The difference in strategy use was significant among the students with less than 3.00 and 3.00 to 3.50 CGPA. Results of meta-cognitive strategies are given also in line graph form in Figure 4.

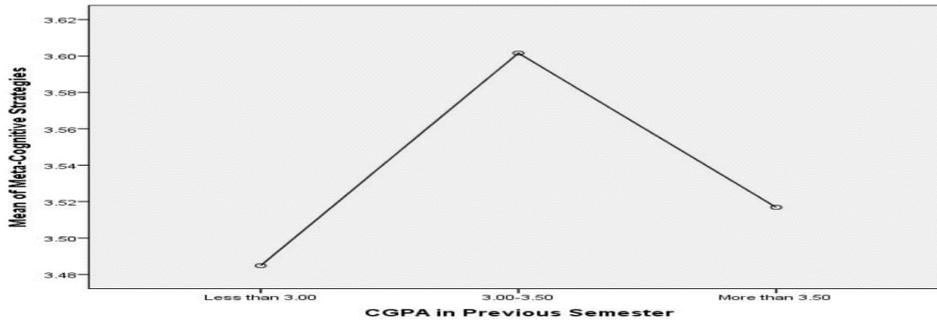


Figure 4 Use of meta-cognitive strategies among high and low achievers

Table 7
Use of compensatory strategies by high and low achievers

Dependent Variable	(I) CGPA in Previous Semester	(J) CGPA in Previous Semester	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Compensatory Strategies	3.00-3.50	Less than 3.00	.02231	.06047	.712
	More than 3.50	Less than 3.00	.33467*	.09215	.000
		3.00-3.50	.31235*	.09399	.001

Table 7 represents the use of compensatory strategies for language learning among high and low achievers. It is revealed from the mean differences that the use of compensatory strategies was significantly

higher among students with more than 3.50 CGPA as compared to students with less than 3.50 CGPA. Graphical representation of compensatory strategies is made in Figure 5.

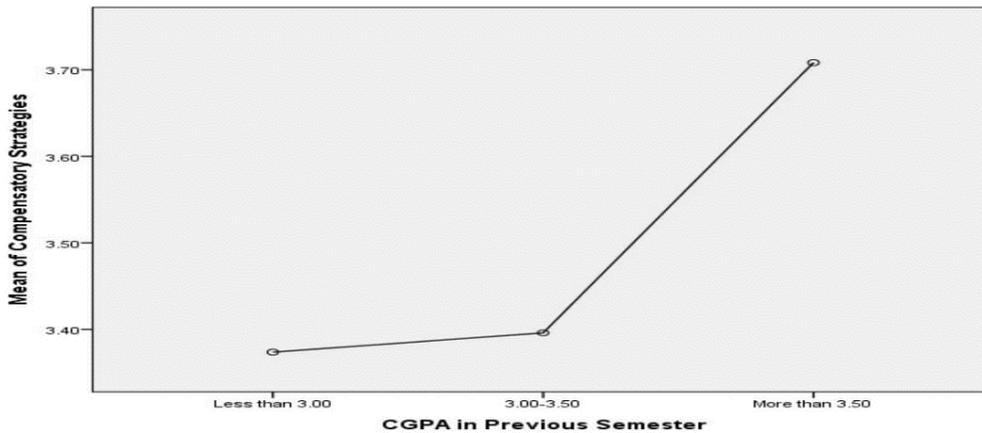


Figure 5 Use of compensatory strategies among high and low achievers

Table 8
Use of social strategies by high and low achievers

Dependent Variable	(I) CGPA in Previous Semester	(J) CGPA in Previous Semester	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Social Strategies	3.00-3.50	Less than 3.00	.01770	.05483	.747
	More than 3.50	Less than 3.00	.13471	.08354	.107

Table 8 indicates the application of social strategies by high and low achievers. Mean difference shows that high achievers used comparatively more social strategies than low achievers. However, the difference was not significant. Figure 6 also illuminates the use of social strategies among low and high achievers.

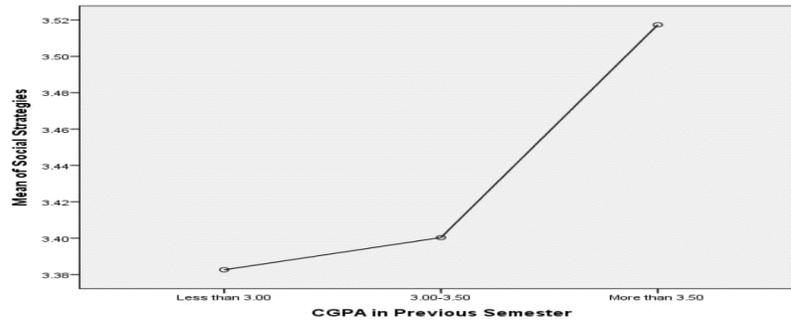


Figure 6 Use of social strategies among high and low achievers

Table 9
Use of effective strategies by high and low achievers

Dependent Variable	(I) CGPA in Previous Semester	(J) CGPA in Previous Semester	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Affective Strategies	3.00-3.50	Less than 3.00	.07466	.05869	.204
	More than 3.50	Less than 3.00	.28853*	.08942	.001
		3.00-3.50	.21387*	.09121	.019

In Table 9, mean difference of the use of effective strategies by the respondents with high and low CGPA is presented. It shows that high achievers used effective strategies more than those who achieved less than 3.50 CGPA. Findings are graphically demonstrated in Figure 7.

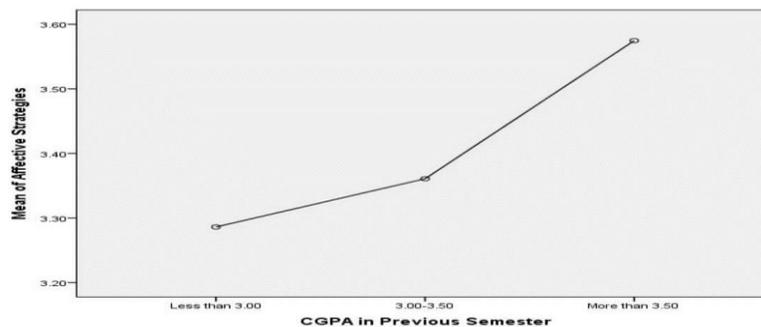


Figure 7 Use of affective strategies among high and low achievers

Table 10
Gender differences in using language learning strategies

Language Learning Strategies	Gender	Mean	Mean Difference	t	Sig.
Memory Strategies	Male	3.2468	-.24471	-5.280	.000
	Female	3.4915			

Cognitive Strategies	Male	3.2680	-.17210	-3.698	.000
	Female	3.4401			
Comprehension Strategies	Male	3.3776	-.24017	-4.396	.000
	Female	3.6177			
Meta-Cognitive Strategies	Male	3.3881	-.24805	-4.898	.000
	Female	3.6361			
Compensatory Strategies	Male	3.2978	-.22158	-3.930	.000
	Female	3.5193			
Social Strategies	Male	3.3895	-.02938	-.585	.559
	Female	3.4189			
Affective Strategies	Male	3.3315	-.07455	-1.423	.155
	Female	3.4061			

Table 10 indicate that males and females used all types of languages learning strategies. However, a significant difference was reported among male and female students in terms of using strategies except for social and effective strategies.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of the study disclosed that students adopted high comprehension and meta-cognitive strategies followed by compensatory strategies and others, i.e. memory, cognitive, compensatory, social, and effective strategies. In line with the findings of Goh and Foong (1997) who reported that Chinese university students used meta-cognitive and compensatory strategies more often than memory or social strategies. The findings are also supported by other studies conducted by Kazi and Iqbal (2011), and Ali, Ghani, Malik and Ahmad (2016), who reported that students in Pakistan used meta-cognitive strategies more often than other types of strategies. In regards to gender differences regarding the use of language learning strategies, females were found to employ comparatively more strategies than males. The findings are in line with the findings of the studies carried out by Goh and Foong (1997), Green and Oxford (1995) and Gu (2002) who reported that the more language learning strategies were used by female students than males.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that more usage of learning strategies leads to high achievement among university students. A significant difference was found among high and low achievers in employing different strategies, namely, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, comprehension strategies, meta-cognitive

strategies, compensatory strategies, social strategies, and effective strategies. The findings of the current study are consistent with previous studies conducted by Al-Hammadi (2012), Orellano (2017), Oxford and Nyikos (1989) Green and Oxford (1995), Wharton (2000) and Su (2005) regarding the effective role of language strategies in enhancing students' academic achievement and language proficiency.

In conclusion, university students highly employed comprehension and meta-cognition strategies followed by compensatory strategies. The females were found to use more strategies than males. Furthermore, high achievers were reported high strategy users, which means that more use of language strategies can result in high academic achievement of students. Therefore, language teachers are recommended to motivate their students to use an array of language learning strategies while teaching students.

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