

**IDENTIFYING LEARNER STRATEGIES OF  
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN AN EFL CONTEXT****YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE BAĞLAMINDA  
ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN DİL ÖĞRENME  
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Learning strategies are the actions that learners use to improve their performance in the learning process. Though many studies have focused on the language learning strategies, a somewhat smaller body of research studies has dealt with university students' use of strategies in terms of gender and class grade. The aim of this study is to measure the language learning strategies preferred by the university students and to reveal whether their preferred learning strategies create any differences in terms of gender and class grades. The study covers 150 students who study in different departments in the Faculty of Education, Muş Alparslan University. The results indicated that language learning strategies that students use are mid-level and they use metacognitive strategies the most and cognitive strategy the least during the language learning process. A significant difference was also found in terms of gender and class grade, meaning that girls use language learning strategies than boys do and first grade students use strategies more than second grades.

**Keywords:** Language learning strategies, EFL, Gender

**Özet**

Dil öğrenme stratejileri, öğrencilerin öğrenme sürecinde performansını artırmak için kullandıkları eylemlerdir. Dil öğrenme stratejileri üzerine çok çalışma olmasına rağmen, cinsiyet ve sınıf düzeyi açısından üniversite öğrencilerin strateji kullanımıyla ilgili çalışmalar yok denecek kadar azdır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, üniversite öğrencileri tarafından tercih edilen dil öğrenme stratejilerini ölçmek ve tercih ettikleri bu stratejilerin cinsiyet ve sınıf düzeyi açısından bir farklılık yaratıp yaratmadığını ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çalışma Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi'nin farklı bölümlerinde öğrenim gören 150 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Sonuçlar, dil öğrenme sürecinde, öğrencilerin kullandığı dil öğrenme stratejilerinin orta seviyede olduğunu, en çok kullanılan stratejilerin üstbilişsel ve en az tercih edilen stratejilerin ise bilişsel stratejiler olduğunu göstermiştir. Sonuçlar cinsiyet ve sınıf düzeyi açısından anlamlı bir fark olduğunu gösteriyor ki bu da kızların erkeklerden; birinci sınıfların ikinci sınıflardan daha çok strateji kullandığını gösteriyor.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Dil öğrenme stratejileri, EFL, Cinsiyet

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## **I. Introduction**

The use of learner strategies has attracted a lot of attention up to now and it has been described in a variety of ways to give information about what happens when a learner uses strategies and how using strategies contributes a learner's learning. Although the term of language learning strategies has been welcomed by the work of Rubin (1975) in the field of foreign/second language teaching, Oxford claims that "such strategies have actually been used for thousands of years" (1990, p. 1). After the work of Rubin (1975), studying learning strategies has become popular in second /foreign language education. According to studies done in the field of foreign/second language teaching, when compared with less successful classmates, successful L2 learners use more learning strategies and employ them more frequently (Lee & Oxford, 2008); the use of strategy is shown to occur before, during, and after L2 tasks (Oxford, Cho, Leung, & Kim, 2004).

Not only has the importance of the strategies been studied but also whether there are differences in use of strategies according to gender, age, motivation, course level and many other issues has become the subject of studies in the field of ESL/EFL. The majority of these studies have focused on gender (for instance, Oxford 1993a, b; Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Green, 1991, 1992; Dreyer, 1992; Yang, 1992, 1993; Green & Oxford, 1993; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995; Lan & Oxford, 2003) but very little work has been reported about class grade (Lee, 2003; Kurt & Atay, 2006) and apart from Kurt and Atay (2006), almost no work has handles gender and class grade together. Therefore, one of the purposes of this paper is to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the frequency of language learning strategy use and gender, and class grade. Second purpose is to reveal which strategies are used most and least.

## **II. Review of Literature**

### **II.I. Language learning strategies**

Strategies are specific actions taken to accomplish a given task (Anderson, 1999; Cohen, 1998). Oxford (1990), also, provides specific examples of Language Learning Strategies (LLS) and a comprehensive definition: "... language learning strategies are specific actions, behaviors, steps or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills..." (p. 8). Additionally, Cohen (1998) states that "learning strategies are processes which are consciously selected by learners and which may result in action to enhance the learning..." In the light of these definitions, it can be said that language learning strategies have a key role in language teaching and learning process since they give some clues about the learners' learning styles and techniques. To get it clearer, Rubin (1975) has suggested that learning strategies are the techniques or devices that a learner may use them to acquire knowledge. In addition to these definitions, there are some kinds of categorizations for the language learning strate-

gies. According to Oxford (1990), LLS are categorized under two main groups as direct and indirect strategies and each category has three subtitles: Direct strategies, dealing with “language itself in a variety of specific tasks and situation” (p. 14) consist of memory, cognitive and comprehension strategies, on the other hand, indirect strategies, “the general management of learning” (p. 15), consist of metacognitive, affective and social strategies. Also, similar to the categorization made by Oxford, Rubin (1975) divided the strategies into two groups as direct and indirect; yet in her categorization, direct strategies are clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning and practice; indirect strategies are practice and production tricks. And finally, O’Malley and Chamot (1990) divided LLS into three categories as cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies.

## **II.II. Research on Language Learning Strategies**

Different variables such as gender, achievement, motivation, career orientation, national origin, aptitude, learning styles, etc. have been the subjects of the studies. For example, according to Politzer & McGroarty (1985) and O’Malley & Chamot (1990) whose studies deal with national origin or ethnicity, Asian students seem to prefer strategies involving rote memorisation and language rules as opposed to more communicative strategies. In addition, Politzer (1983) purported that Hispanics and Asians used different strategies for language learning; Hispanics chose more social, interactive strategies, while Asians opted for greater rote memorisation.

In their research, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) found that of all variables measured in their study, the most powerful influence on reported use of LLS was the level of motivation that considerably influenced the tendency of language learners to use or not to use strategies in four out of five factors: formal–rule related practice strategies, functional practice strategies, general study strategies, and conversational input elicitation strategies. As these results indicated, the more motivated learners used these types of strategies significantly more often.

Ehrman and Oxford (1995) investigated the effect of the cognitive aptitude, learning strategies, learning styles, personality type, motivation, and anxiety on the speaking and reading proficiency of 885 learners of Spanish, German, Romanian and Cantonese as a foreign language. It was Cognitive aptitude at the highest correlation with both L2 speaking and reading. Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) developed by Oxford (1990) was used to measure the strategy use of learners. The data underlined that only Cognitive learning strategies had a significant correlation with the participants’ proficiency.

Chamot and El-Dinary (1999) interested in the learning strategies of child L2 learners in immersion programs. The research question focused on the more effective and

less effective learning strategies used by child learners in elementary foreign language immersion programs. Low proficiency learners seemed to use a great number of phonetic decoding strategies compared to high proficiency learners. The research also showed that high proficiency learners used a greater number of background strategies than low proficiency learners did.

### **II.III. Strategy Use and Gender**

Many empirical strategy frequency studies in ESL/EFL involving gender show females are different from males while using strategies and the findings have usually favored females as more frequent users of strategies (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990; Dreyer & Oxford, 1996; Green & Oxford, 1995; Lan & Oxford, 2003; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995). Additionally, Aslan (2009) concludes that females are superior to males in using strategies in his M.A. study in which the participants are 257 (153 male, 104 female) university students who are at the same level, and in which he uses SILL of Oxford (1990), which was translated into Turkish by Cesur and Fer (2007) intending to investigate the language learning strategies used by learners of English as a foreign language, and aiming to find out the difference in strategy use between genders. Similarly, Mochoizuki (1999) and Yalçın (2006) underline that females use language learning strategies more than males.

Besides these works, “Some studies, noted by Bedell and Green and Oxford, have shown that males have surpassed females on individual strategies but not on whole clusters or categories of strategies.” (Oxford & Burry-stock, 199, p. 14). However, there are also studies in which no significant differences occur between males and females. In her M.A. study in which the aim is to check whether there are significant differences in the learning style and strategy preferences between male and female learners and in which SILL (Oxford, 1990) was applied, Tabanlıoğlu (2003) asserts that no significant difference is available in the preferences of learning strategies between males and females. Like Tabanlıoğlu, Gömleksiz (2013) finds no significant difference between males and females participants while aiming to see whether pre-service teachers’ opinions toward LLS differ according to gender variable. These controversial results can be expected as true in their own contexts. Nevertheless, it should be underlined that a great amount of studies on gender have laid emphasize on the existence of a significant difference between male and female recently, and the majority of these papers have favored females in using strategies while learning a second language.

### **II.IV. Strategy Use and Class Grade**

Although many studies (for example, Oxford *et al.*, 1988, 1993a, b; Ehrman and Oxford, 1989; Green, 1991, 1992; Dreyer, 1992; Yang, 1992b, 1993; Green and Oxford, 1993; Oxford, 1993a, b; Oxford & Ehrman 1995; Yalçın, 2006; Aslan, 2009) have been carried out in terms of different variables such as gender, achievement, motivation, career orientation, national origin, aptitude, learning styles, etc., it is not common to encounter

to the studies that focus on class grade variable. One of these rare articles is Lee's study with the students of Korean junior high school. The pattern of Lee's study (2003) fits the popular idea which is that the score of first year students is almost always higher. Unfortunately, Lee (2003) has no explanation for the reason why the use of strategies did not increase by year level.

The second study is prepared by Kurt and Atay (2006) reveal a significant relationship between frequency of strategy use and grade level which means Grade 6 students use learning strategies more than Grade 8 students do. In this sense, the results resemble the findings of Lee's (2003) study. Kurt and Atay (2006) claim that the main reason for this can be attached to the Turkish educational system.

#### **II.V. Strategy Types Used Most and Least**

Lachini's (1997) study with Iranian learners of English as a foreign language, "basing his strategy model on that of O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and using a likert-type questionnaire developed by the researcher to measure the strategy use of the learners" (Akbari & Talebinezhad, 2003), indicates that cognitive strategies are the most frequently used learning strategies. Likely, Sheorey's (1999) investigation of Indian learners of English claims that learners of English in India heavily rely on metacognitive and cognitive learning strategies. Bremner (1999) studied with Hong Kong learners of English as second language and used SILL (1990) to measure the strategy use of learners. According to the data, Hong Kong Learners of English use metacognitive and compensatory strategies. Significant differences were found in strategy use as students advanced in foreign languages (Bialystok, 1981 and Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). The more students advanced, the more formal practice with rules and forms became less effective, but functional practice with communicative language showed no such limitations. When advancement occurs in course level or years of study, it does not prove the use of better strategies in every instance. The study by Cohen & Aphek (1981), discovered that both good and bad learning strategies appeared across course levels. Most of the research claims that the more advanced the language learner, the better the strategies used.

### **III. Method**

#### **III.1. Participants**

In this study, there were one hundred fifty students at different departments (Primary School Teaching, Pre-school Education, Social Sciences) in the Faculty of Education, Muş Alparslan University. The subjects were selected randomly. Subjects, both male and female, were at the age of 18-21 and they were at different class grades (see table 1 for the distribution by grade level and gender).

**Table 1.** *Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of the*

sample group

| Variables |          | f  | %    |
|-----------|----------|----|------|
| Class     | 1. grade | 60 | 40,0 |
|           | 2. grade | 46 | 30,7 |
|           | 3. grade | 44 | 29,3 |
|           | missing  | 0  | 0    |
| Gender    | female   | 63 | 42,0 |
|           | male     | 87 | 58,0 |
|           | missing  | 0  | 0    |

### III.II. Instrument

To detect the students' LLS of English, SILL, developed by Oxford (1990) was used (see the Appendix for a copy of the SILL). In order to remove any possible complexity resulting from the limited L2 proficiency of learners, the Turkish version of SILL (Oxford, 1990), translated and validated by Cesur and Fer (2007), was administered to the participants. There were fifty likert-type statements in SILL, each dealing with one of the strategic aspect of learners' behavior. The choices were given numerical values that underlined the learners' preference or tendency degree towards the items of the questionnaire, on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("never or almost never true of me") to 5 ("always, or almost always true of me."). The fifty statements in the inventory quantified the learners' use of Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Metacognitive, Affective and Social strategies. These subscales included:

(1) *Memory strategies*, such as grouping, imagery, rhyming, and structured reviewing (nine items).

(2) *Cognitive strategies*, such as reasoning, analyzing, summarizing (all reflective of deep processing), as well as general practicing (14 items).

(3) *Compensation strategies* (to compensate for limited knowledge), such as guessing meanings from the context in reading and listening and using synonyms and gestures to convey meaning when the precise expression is not known (six items).

(4) *Metacognitive strategies*, such as paying attention, consciously searching for practice opportunities, planning for language tasks, self-evaluating one's progress, and monitoring error (nine items).

(5) *Affective (emotional, motivation-related) strategies*, such as anxiety reduction, self-encouragement, and self-reward (six items).

(6) *Social strategies*, such as asking questions, cooperating with native speakers of the language, and becoming culturally aware (six items). (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995)

### III.III. Procedures

SILL was administered to the participants during their English lesson. To elicit participants' best performance, before filling out the inventory, all students were informed about the purpose of the study and the volunteer participants filled out the inventory and returned the form to the researcher.

### III.IV. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed for significant differences (Independent samples T-test) between males and females. The data were also analyzed to understand the strategies used most and least by the participants. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the LLS by grade level. Due to the ambiguity among grades (it was difficult to conclude whether the significant difference was between first and second grades, or first and third grades or second and third grades), LSD results were applied to clarify where the significant difference was (significant at  $p < 0.05$  level).

### IV. Results

To answer the first research question asking whether there is a significant difference of the strategy use of the university students in terms of gender, the results obtained indicate that unlike Cognitive and Social strategies, a significant difference occurred by gender while using Memory, Compensation, Metacognitive and Affective strategies, meaning that girls use language learning strategies than boys do ( $p < .05$ ). The results of the strategy use of the learners for gender in each strategy category are reported in the Table 2:

**Table 2.** *Independent samples T-test results of Language Learning Strategies by gender*

|                          | Gender | N   | Mean | Std. Deviation | p     |
|--------------------------|--------|-----|------|----------------|-------|
| Memory Strategies        | male   | 63  | 2,14 | ,870           | ,000* |
|                          | female | 87  | 2,68 | ,88            |       |
| Cognitive Strategies     | male   | 63  | 1,97 | ,76            | ,065  |
|                          | female | 87  | 2,20 | ,73            |       |
| Compensation Strategies  | male   | 63  | 2,19 | ,91            | ,043* |
|                          | female | 87  | 2,50 | ,91            |       |
| Metacognitive Strategies | male   | 63  | 2,25 | 1,01           | ,022* |
|                          | female | 87  | 2,66 | 1,11           |       |
| Affective Strategies     | male   | 63  | 1,97 | ,85            | ,009* |
|                          | female | 87  | 2,37 | ,98            |       |
| Social Strategies        | male   | 63  | 2,24 | ,95            | ,074  |
|                          | female | 86  | 2,51 | ,89            |       |
|                          | Toplam | 150 |      |                |       |

$P < 0.05$

To answer the second question which underlines whether there is a significant difference of the strategy use of the university students in terms of class grade, the ANOVA test was applied. According to the results of ANOVA, a significant difference occurred for class grades while using Affective and Social strategies. The results of the strategy use of the learners in each strategy category are reported in the Table 3:

**Table 3.** *The results of ANOVA for comparison of language learning strategies by grade level*

|                          |          | N   | Mean   | Std. Deviation | p     |
|--------------------------|----------|-----|--------|----------------|-------|
| Memory Strategies        | 1. grade | 60  | 2,4051 | ,85064         | ,053  |
|                          | 2. grade | 46  | 2,2757 | ,85270         |       |
|                          | 3. grade | 44  | 2,7295 | 1,03139        |       |
|                          | Total    | 150 | 2,4606 | ,91992         |       |
| Cognitive Strategies     | 1. grade | 60  | 2,0996 | ,71749         | ,448  |
|                          | 2. grade | 46  | 2,0168 | ,74778         |       |
|                          | 3. grade | 44  | 2,2174 | ,80055         |       |
|                          | Total    | 150 | 2,1088 | ,75087         |       |
| Compensation Strategies  | 1. grade | 60  | 2,4528 | ,95131         | ,676  |
|                          | 2. grade | 46  | 2,3152 | ,95918         |       |
|                          | 3. grade | 44  | 2,3167 | ,85443         |       |
|                          | Total    | 150 | 2,3707 | ,92273         |       |
| Metacognitive Strategies | 1. grade | 60  | 2,6215 | 1,06419        | ,314  |
|                          | 2. grade | 46  | 2,2989 | 1,16924        |       |
|                          | 3. grade | 44  | 2,5234 | 1,03344        |       |
|                          | Total    | 150 | 2,4938 | 1,09000        |       |
| Affective Strategies     | 1. grade | 60  | 2,4389 | ,96109         | ,048* |
|                          | 2. grade | 46  | 2,0181 | 1,07395        |       |
|                          | 3. grade | 44  | 2,0886 | ,73765         |       |
|                          | Total    | 150 | 2,2071 | ,95285         |       |
| Social Strategies        | 1. grade | 60  | 2,5861 | ,93554         | ,031* |
|                          | 2. grade | 45  | 2,1104 | ,95171         |       |
|                          | 3. grade | 44  | 2,4508 | ,84705         |       |
|                          | Total    | 149 | 2,4025 | ,93110         |       |

P<0.05

According to the results of ANOVA, a significant difference occurred for class grades while using Affective and Social strategies. However, analysis of variance was not helpful to clarify the ambiguity among class grades (it was difficult to conclude whether



the significant difference was between first and second grades, or first and third grades or second and third grades). That's why; LSD results were applied to clarify where the significant difference was. The data were helpful to clarify that the significant difference was between first and second grades, meaning first grade students used social and affective strategies more than did second grade students (see Table 4. for the results of LSD).

**Table 4.** *LSD test results by class variable.*

|                      |     | I        | J        | (I-J)    | P    |
|----------------------|-----|----------|----------|----------|------|
| Affective Strategies | LSD | 1. grade | 2. grade | ,42077*  | ,024 |
|                      |     |          | 3. grade | ,35025   | ,062 |
|                      |     | 2. grade | 1. grade | -,42077* | ,024 |
|                      |     |          | 3. grade | -,07052  | ,722 |
|                      |     | 3. grade | 1. grade | -,35025  | ,062 |
|                      |     |          | 2. grade | ,07052   | ,722 |
| Social Strategies    | LSD | 1. grade | 2. grade | ,47574*  | ,009 |
|                      |     |          | 3. grade | ,13535   | ,457 |
|                      |     | 2. grade | 1. grade | -,47574* | ,009 |
|                      |     |          | 3. grade | -,34039  | ,082 |
|                      |     | 3. sinif | 1. sinif | -,13535  | ,457 |
|                      |     |          | 2. sinif | ,34039   | ,082 |

The third question was about the most and least preferred LLS by the university students. It was found that university students use language learning strategies at the medium level. When the six strategies (Memory Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, Compensation Strategies, Metacognitive Strategies, Affective Strategies and Social Strategies) are taken into consideration, the most preferred strategies by the participants were metacognitive strategies whereas cognitive strategies were the least preferred. Please see Table 5 for these results.

**Table 5.** *Language Learning Strategies used most and least*

| Language Learning Strategies | X    | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------------|------|----------------|
| Metacognitive Strategies     | 2,49 | 1,09           |
| Memory Strategies            | 2,46 | 0,91           |
| Social Strategies            | 2,40 | 0,93           |
| Compensation Strategies      | 2,37 | 0,92           |
| Affective Strategies         | 2,20 | 0,95           |
| Cognitive Strategies         | 2,10 | 0,75           |
| Total                        | 2,33 |                |

## V. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed at shedding light on the learning strategy use of university students of English in terms of gender and class grade, and it was also performed with the aim of revealing the most and least used strategies. The initial question the study answered was whether there existed a relation between gender and strategy use in second language learning. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant difference between males and females while using memory, compensation, metacognitive and affective strategies, meaning that the female students used learning strategies more than the male students and the difference was proved to be significant with the statistical results. Several scholars (1987) came up with findings in their studies that females outscored males in strategy use (for instance, Oxford *et al.*, 1988, 1993a, b; Ehrman and Oxford, 1989; Green, 1991, 1992; Noguchi, 1991; Dreyer, 1992; Yang, 1992, 1993; Green and Oxford, 1993; Oxford, 1993a, b; Oxford & Ehrman 1995; Yalçın, 2006; Aslan, 2009). In addition, O'Malley and Chamot claimed that “females reported using learning strategies significantly more often than males and used a wider range of strategies” (1990, p. 106). However, there are some other research studies that found the opposite. In his study, Tran (1988) discovered that Vietnamese women use less language learning strategies than men. Additionally, Tercanlıoğlu (2004) also found that male students surpassed females in using LLS. She claimed that the possible reason was because the Turkish society was male-dominated. Even though her study statistically proved that males were superior to females, the result could be assumed as true only in its own context.

To find a possible reason why females were superior to males in strategy use, an interview was needed with the whole participants. Most learners reported that they were not eager to learn English. When there are no specific purposes or sources of motivation, males seem to spend less effort in language learning as Griffiths (2008), also, states that

“Due to generally lower motivation, male students also need continuous and concrete reminders regarding the advantages of foreign language study for their future careers. Due to the lower relative importance they place on language studies, males are immediately disadvantaged in their opportunity for social study...” (p.79).

In contrast to Griffiths' findings (2008), in this study it was found that females were unmotivated.

The second research question was whether there was a relation between class grade in second language learning and overall language learning strategy use. According to the statistical analyses of the current study, a significant difference occurred between first and second grades while using affective and social strategies, meaning that first grade students used LLS more than second grade students did, regardless of their gender. According to Oxford and Nyikos (1989), spending more years of studying English had

a significant effect on the use of learning strategies. However, in this study, similar to Lee's (2003) study with Korean students, the use of learning strategies did not increase by grade level. The possible reason why first grade learners were successful in use of learning strategies might be because of Turkish education system. The curriculum of English lesson for university learners provided English lessons only for the first year. Unfortunately, one could not encounter English courses for the following years of education, except free courses in state institutions or private courses which asked for extra payment. In this sense, after the first grade, their relation with English, actually, finished and the process of learning a foreign language came to end. The importance of the English should be explained by lecturers and English should not be treated as a compulsory lesson. The curriculum of English lesson for universities might be re-prepared and the English lesson might be taught to the all grades, as done in the primary, secondary and high school, till their graduation. The learners might be given a vital chance to study foreign language.

Finally, the last question focused on finding the most and the least used LLS According to the analyses (see Table 2), taking all the participants into account, metacognitive strategies (indirect) were the most used whereas cognitive strategies (direct) were used the least while learning English. Most of the studies conducted on this topic generally did not comment on this difference. From the rare researchers underlining this point, Ozseven (1993) also found that the participants of his study employed more indirect strategies. Likely, in his M.A. thesis, Aslan (2009) found that the most frequently used strategies by the whole group were metacognitive strategies. In this context, focusing on learning, how to plan and manage learning and self-evaluating was acquired by learners.

The findings revealed that females were superior to male students in using LLS, which indicated a different result according to the previous studies. Although many studies agreed the female superiority; yet they found male superiority in some strategies. Oxford and Burry-stock (1995), for example, found that females surpassed females on individual strategies but not on whole clusters or categories of strategies. Focusing on the learning strategies by class grade is another important side of this study since almost no studies have mentioned about learning strategies by class grade.

To sum up, the study indicated that a significant difference occurred in terms of gender and class grade, meaning that females were significantly more successful than males in use of learning strategies and meaning that first grade students used more strategies than second grade students. Therefore, depending on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that females are more successful language learners because they employ more LLS than men. The significant difference occurred by gender and class grade should be taken into consideration by lecturers and a consultation should be provided to help learners to choose the right strategies for themselves. Learners should be informed that there

were no absolute bad or good strategies: a good strategy for someone might not work for another learner. Once they were taught how to apply strategies (that requires qualified teachers) for themselves, the differences between males and females might be less significant while using strategies.

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