



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES OF LOW PROFICIENCY
UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK (UNIMAS)**

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**Kota Samarahan
2008**

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This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
Bachelor of Education with Honours
Teaching English as Second Language (TESL)

Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
2008

The project entitled **Language Learning Strategies of Low Proficiency Undergraduates in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)** was prepared by Amelia Soon Huai Kim and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Education with Honours (Teaching English as Second Language).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ICT	Information and Telecommunications Technology
LLS	Language Learning Strategies
MUET	Malaysian University English Test
SILL	Strategy Inventory for Language Learning
UNIMAS	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PROTOCOL TITLE : EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING AMONG WORKING MOTHERS

PROTOCOL IDENTIFIER : NORMELIA BT MOHD DAUD

SPONSOR : NIL

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR : NORMELIA BT MOHD DAUD

INSTITUTION ADDRESS : FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
LOT 77, SECTION 22 KTLD,
JALAN TUN AHMAD ZAIDI ADRUCE,
93150 KUCHING,
SARAWAK

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

General objective:

The general objective of this study is to identify the EBF practice among working mothers in Lot 77.

Specific objectives:

- a) To state the duration of EBF practice among working mothers in Lot 77.
- b) To identify factors that promotes EBF practice among working mothers in Lot 77.
- c) To identify factors that prevents EBF practice among working mothers in Lot 77.

STUDY DESCRIPTION

The data will be collected by using a set of questionnaire. The approximate time to answer the questionnaire will be 10-15 minutes. The data collection will be conducted during office hour, 8am-5pm.

RISKS OF STUDY PARTICIPATION

There are no risks for participation in this study.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF STUDY PARTICIPATION

This study can help to identify factors that affect working mother to EBF their children in the selected workplace. The availability of children center in working place may help working mother to continue EBF their children. Thus, this would be able to influence the institution to provide the facility to help working mothers to EBF.

WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDY

Subsequent to your consent, you may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study any time.

TO OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION

Any further inquiry or clarification can be referred directly to my supervisor, Ms Jane Buncuan at 082 292284. You also can contact her via e-mail at jbuncuan@fmhs.unimas.my

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

The participation in this study is voluntary. Participant should not be forced in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information provided will be kept confidential and as a result, you will not be identified in any reports on this study.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I have read, or have had been read to me, in language understandable to me, the above information. The content and meaning of this information has been fully explained to me.

I have had time and opportunity to ask any questions that I have about the study and this form, and all my questions have been answered. I have read, or have been read to me, all pages of this consent form and the risks described. I voluntarily consent and offer to take part in this study. By signing this consent form, I certify that all information I have given, including my medical history, is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that I will receive a copy of this signed consent form.

Printed name of subject

IC. No

Signature of subject

Date

Thumbprint of subject (if applicable)

Printed name of witness

IC. No.

Signature of witness

Date

Printed name of legally authorized

IC. No.

representative (if applicable)

Signature of legally authorized
Representative

Date

Relationship to the subject: _____

Printed name of person explaining consent

IC. No.

Signature of person explaining consent

Date

BORANG KEIZINAN

TAJUK KAJIAN	: PENYUSUAN BADAN SEPENUH DI KALANGAN IBU-IBU YANG BEKERJA
PENYELIDIK KAJIAN	: NORMELIA BT MOHD DAUD
PENYUMBANG	: TIADA
PENYELIDIK UTAMA	: NORMELIA BT MOHD DAUD
ALAMAT INSTITUSI	: FAKULTI PERUBATAN DAN SAINS KESIHATAN, UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK. LOT 77, SECTION 22 KTLD, JALAN TUN AHMAD ZAIDI ADRUCE, 93150 KUCHING, SARAWAK

TUJUAN KAJIAN

Objektif umum:

Objektif umum dalam kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti amalan penyusuan badan sepenuhnya di kalangan ibu-ibu bekerja di Lot 77.

Objektif spesifik:

- a) Untuk menyatakan tempoh amalan penyusuan badan sepenuh di kalangan ibu bekerja di Lot 77.
- b) Untuk mengenalpasti faktor-faktor yang mengalakkan penyusuan badan sepenuh di kalangan ibu-ibu bekerja di Lot 77.
- c) Untuk mengenalpasti faktor-faktor yang menghalang penyusuan badan sepenuh di kalangan ibu bekerja di Lot 77.

KETERANGAN KAJIAN

50 orang ibu-ibu bekerja akan dipilih secara rambang dalam kajian ini. Maklumat akan dikumpul dengan menggunakan satu set borang kajiselidik. Masa yang dianggarkan untuk menjawab borang kajiselidik adalah 10-15 minit. Pengumpulan maklumat akan dilakukan semasa waktu pejabat, 8pagi-5petang.

RISIKO PENYERTAAN KAJIAN

Tiada

PENYERTAAN DALAM KAJIAN

Kajian ini dapat membantu untuk mengenalpasti faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi amalan penyusuan badan menyeluruh di kalangan ibu-ibu bekerja di tempat kerja yang dipilih. Kewujudan pusat jagaan kanak-kanak di tempat kerja dapat membantu ibu-ibu untuk meneruskan penyusuan badan menyeluruh. Oleh itu, kajian ini dapat mempengaruhi institusi

berkenaan untuk menyediakan kemudahan tersebut untuk membantu ibu-ibu yang bekerja untuk penyusuan susu badan sepenuh.

PENARIKAN DIRI DARIPADA KAJIAN

Seperti yang telah dinyatakan dalam borang keizinan, anda berhak menolak atau berhenti menjadi salah seorang dari peserta kajiselidik ini pada bila-bila masa sepanjang kajiselidik ini dijalankan.

MENDAPATKAN MAKLUMAT LANJUT

Untuk mendapatkan sebarang maklumat lanjutan dan sebarang pengesahan, anda boleh menghubungi penasihat kajian saya iaitu Cik Jane Buncuan di 082 292284. Anda juga dapat menghubungi beliau melalui emailnya di jbuncuan@fmhs.unimas.my

PENYERTAAN SUKARELA

Penyertaan dalam kajian ini adalah sukarela. peserta tidak akan dipaksa untuk menyertai kajian ini.

SULIT DAN RAHSIA

Semua maklumat yang diberi akan dipastikan sulit, nama anda tidak akan dicatitkan dalam sebarang laporan dalam kajian ini.

KEIZINAN UNTUK MENYERTAI KAJIAN

Saya telah membaca, dibacakan, dalam bahasa yang saya fahami tentang maklumat di atas. Isi dan maksud maklumat ini telah di terangkan kepada saya.

Saya mempunyai masa dan peluang untuk menanyakan soalan yang saya ada tentang kajian dan borang ini dan semua soalan saya telah di jawab. Saya telah baca, dibacakan tentang semua helaian borang keizinan dan risiko yang diterangkan. Saya sukarela bersetuju untuk mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini. Dengan menandatangani borang ini, saya mengesahkan semua maklumat yang saya beri, termasuk sejarah kesihatan adalah benar sepanjang dalam pengetahuan saya. Saya memahami yang saya akan menerima salinan borang keizinan pernyertaan kajian.

Nama subjek

No. Kad pengenalan

Tandatangan subjek

Tarikh

Cap jari subjek (jika perlu)

Nama saksi

_____.
No. Kad pengenalan

Tandatangan saksi

Tarikh

Nama wakil pihak berkuasa (jika perlu)

No. Kad pengenalan

Tandatangan wakil pihak berkuasa (jika perlu)

Tarikh

Hubungan dengan subjek: _____

Nama individu yang menerangkan borang
keizinan penyertaan

No. Kad pengenalan

Tandatangan individu yang menerangkan
keizinan borang penyertaan

Tarikh

ABSTRACT

Language Learning Strategies of Low Proficiency Undergraduates in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).

Amelia Soon Huai Kim

This study aimed to identify the general language learning strategies (LLS) preferences of low English proficiency undergraduates in UNIMAS, LLS preferences of different ethnic groups, LLS preferences of various fields of studies, and gender differences in LLS preferences. A total of 134 Preparatory English 1 students participated in this survey. Questionnaire was used as data collection instrument. It consisted of background questionnaire and Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 7.0 by Oxford (1990). Data was interpreted based on Oxford's (1990) interpretation key and was analysed using Microsoft Excel 2003. Strategy group with the highest average was categorised the most frequently used strategy while the lowest average was considered the least frequently used strategy. Results indicated that Metacognitive strategies was the most frequent used strategy while Memory and Compensation strategies were the least preferred strategies. Metacognitive strategies was claimed most frequently used strategy by subjects from all ethnic groups. The Chinese subjects preferred Affective and Memory strategies least. Compensation strategies was the least frequently used strategy by the Malay subjects, Indian subjects, and the indigenous groups. The Science and Technical students ranked Cognitive strategies as second important strategy while the Art and Humanities students ranked Social strategies as second important, followed by Affective strategies. The males ranked Cognitive strategies higher than Social and Affective strategies. The females ranked Social and Affective strategies higher than Cognitive strategies. The findings suggest that teaching and learning process should be self-directed, learner-centred, and include more communicative activities.

ABSTRAK

Strategi Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris Oleh Mahasiswa Yang Lemah Dalam Bahasa Inggeris di Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)

Amelia Soon Huai Kim

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti strategi pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris (LLS) oleh mahasiswa yang lemah dalam Bahasa Inggeris di Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) secara umum, LLS yang gemar digunakan oleh kumpulan etnik yang berlainan, LLS yang digemarkan oleh mahasiswa dari pelbagai bidang pengajian, dan perbezaan jantina dalam kegemaran LLS. Sejumlah 134 orang pelajar dari kursus Preparatory English 1 telah menjadi sampel kajian ini. Instrumen kajian yang digunakan ialah soal selidik. Soal selidik ini mengandungi soal selidik latar belakang sampel dan soal selidik Inventori Strategi untuk Pembelajaran Bahasa (SILL) versi 7.0 oleh Oxford (1990). Data diterjemah berpandukan kekunci penterjemahan keputusan SILL Oxford (1990) dan dianalisis dengan menggunakan Microsoft Excel 2003. Kumpulan strategi dengan purata tertinggi dikategorikan sebagai strategi yang paling kerap digunakan manakala kumpulan dengan purata paling rendah ialah strategi yang paling kurang digunakan. Keputusan yang diperoleh menunjukkan bahawa strategi Metakognitif paling kerap digunakan manakala strategi Memori dan Kompensasi paling kurang digunakan oleh sampel secara umumnya. Strategi Metakognitif dilaporkan paling kerap digunakan oleh pelajar dari semua kumpulan etnik. Subjek Cina melaporkan paling kurang menggunakan strategi Afektif and Memori. Strategi Kompensasi merupakan strategi yang paling kurang digunakan oleh subjek Melayu, subjek India, dan subjek kumpulan peribumi. Pelajar dari bidang Sains dan Teknikal meletakkan strategi Kognitif sebagai strategi yang kedua penting sedangkan pelajar dari Sastera dan Kemanusiaan meletakkan strategi Sosial sebagai strategi yang kedua penting, diikuti dengan strategi Afektif. Strategi Kognitif diberikan kedudukan lebih tinggi daripada strategi Sosial dan Afektif oleh sampel lelaki. Sampel perempuan pula meletakkan strategi Sosial dan Afektif lebih tinggi daripada strategi Kognitif. Keputusan kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran seharusnya membolehkan pembelajaran arahan kendiri, berpusatkan pelajar, dan mempunyai lebih banyak aktiviti komunikasi.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, brief information on language learning strategies, statement of problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, operational definitions of key terms, and scope of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

In Malaysia, *Bahasa Malaysia* is given the prestige as the national language of Malaysia while English Language is acknowledged as the second language in the country. When the New Primary School Curriculum and the Integrated Secondary School Curriculum were implemented in Malaysian educational system in 1983, *Bahasa Malaysia* was used extensively as instructional medium in the teaching and learning processes from primary to tertiary levels and English Language was taught as a subject. Due to this emphasis on *Bahasa Malaysia*, a high percentage of students only had the opportunity to speak and practise English during the English Language periods (Nesamalar, Saratha & Teh, 1995). Outside of the English Language periods, the majority of the students prefer to speak in their own mother tongues such as *Bahasa Malaysia*, Mandarin, Tamil or other local dialects.

On average, students in Malaysia are exposed to 11 years of learning English Language in the primary and secondary levels of educations which should prepare them to be good and competent users of the English Language. Unfortunately, the situation does not turn out as one would expect. Although the students have learnt English for at least 11 years, many end up with different levels of proficiency. Individual differences such as students' backgrounds, levels of exposure to English Language, motivation and

attitudes towards the language affect their proficiency levels. In addition to the above mentioned ones, another major factor that creates individual differences is the language learning strategies that students used in learning the target language.

1.2 Language Learning Strategies

Different students use varying strategies in learning a language. Language Learning Strategies (LLS) as noted by Oxford (1990) are tools that help learners to determine their levels of proficiency in learning a new language. Chamot (1987) defined LLS as techniques, approaches, deliberate actions that students take to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content areas of information. Six categories of LLS are Memory strategies, Cognitive strategies, Compensation strategies, Metacognitive strategies, Affective strategies, and Social strategies. Types of LLS used and the frequency of use of strategies are vital in language learning (Green & Oxford, 1995). LLS are important components of a language programme and are now recognised as an essential part of successful language learning.

Studies on Language Learning Strategies have been conducted in both local and overseas settings. A study done by Wong (2005) investigated the relationship between graduate ESL pre-service teachers' language learning strategies and their language self-efficacy beliefs. Participants in this study were 74 graduate pre-service teachers (13 males, 61 females) undergoing a one-year Diploma in Education course in a teachers' college in Malaysia. According to her, there is a positive relationship between the use of language learning strategies and self-efficacy perceptions. The participants mentioned the use of Cognitive strategies most often and the use of Social strategies was ranked second. Two learning strategies that were least used were Compensation strategies and Affective strategies. Findings from the study enabled English Language instructors to help students who are facing such problems in learning English by using instructional and assessment procedures that focus on task mastery than guessing and using circumlocution during communication to foster high perceptions of self-efficacy in the pre-service English teachers (Wong, 2005).

In another study conducted by Griffiths (2003) on 348 students in a private language school in New Zealand, she discovered a positive correlation between course level and reported frequency of language learning strategy use. Griffiths (2003) found language learning strategies were reportedly used significantly more frequently by

advanced students than by elementary students. According to an examination of the patterns of language learning strategy use which emerged from the data, the higher level students reported highly frequent use of strategies relating to interaction with others, vocabulary, reading, tolerance of ambiguity, language system, the management of feelings, the management of learning, and the utilisation of available resources (Griffiths, 2003).

Findings from both studies have shown that LLS is important in learning English. More and more researchers have become interested in conducting studies into this area to facilitate the language learning process in line with contemporary eclectic developments in the theory and practice of English language teaching (Griffiths & Parr, 2001).

1.3 Statement of Problem

The teaching of English Language in the Malaysian education system is focused on equipping and preparing students to communicate effectively and efficiently for social and professional purposes (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1989). In 2005, English was introduced as the instructional medium of higher learning institutions (Saran, 2005). The move is important as English is regarded as a vital language to engage in accessing information from academic, professional, and recreational resources. Hence, it is crucial for students to master the English Language so that when they study at the tertiary level, they will be able to follow and understand the lectures as well as complete their assignments or course work.

Furthermore, another function of the English Language is to enable Malaysians to engage meaningfully in local and international trade and commerce (Huraian Sukatan Pelajaran Malaysia, 2003). Hence, the purpose is to produce Malaysians who are able to compete with other countries in the field of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and international trade in this globalisation era.

Unfortunately, every year in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), more than 50 percent of the new intake students are in the low proficiency category. These students are those who obtained Bands 1 to 3 in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) and they are required to enrol in remedial language courses namely Preparatory English 1 and Preparatory English 2 before they can proceed to higher level generic courses such as English for Professional Purposes, Creative Writing in

English, Academic Reading and Writing, English for the Real World, and English for Self Expression.

Sadly, the majority of the students are used to *Bahasa Malaysia* as the instructional medium. Therefore, when being exposed to an environment where English is the medium of instruction such as studying in the university, most of them are unable to cope. For example, when attending lectures, the proficient students will not have problems or only encounter minor problems. During revision, these students would still manage to understand the lecture notes they have copied from the lectures based on their background knowledge and their competencies in English. In doing assignments and examinations, they would be able to fulfil the expectations of the assignments as well as understand and answer the examination questions. Hence, the proficient students perform academically better and get higher grades in assignments and examinations compared to the low English proficiency students.

However, the situation worsens for low English proficiency students. During the lectures, they may not be able to understand the contents of the lectures which are delivered in English. Having difficulties in listening to the lectures or figuring out the vocabulary, they may even encounter problems in the simple task of copying the main ideas of the lectures. As such they may not be able to digest the content main ideas of the lectures, due to their limitations and incompetencies in English. Later on during their revision, they may encounter problems in recalling and understanding what they have copied from the lectures. These weaknesses also will cause them difficulties in doing assignments and answering examinations questions. All these lead to the fact that low English proficiency students fail to perform well in their studies.

Other than that, a more serious consequence is that these low English proficiency students may graduate but they are unable to get employment. One of the requirements for employment is having the ability to communicate competently in English. Thus, these low English proficiency students who are unable to communicate in English would have limited chances of getting employment.

Therefore, it is important that this study to be carried out to identify the language learning preferences of low English proficiency students in UNIMAS.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are to:

1. identify the language learning strategies preferences of low proficiency undergraduates in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).
2. identify the language learning strategies preferences of different ethnic groups of low proficiency undergraduates in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).
3. identify the language learning strategies preferences of low proficiency undergraduates from various fields of studies in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).
4. identify the language learning strategies preferences of low proficiency undergraduates of different gender in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).

1.5 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study would highlight and emphasize the importance of language learning strategies as one of the crucial factors in assisting students to master English as their second language.

As the low proficiency learners make up the majority of UNIMAS students, therefore, this study seeks to find out their language learning strategies preferences. Based on the findings, lecturers of remedial language courses may be aware of the strategies used by low English proficiency students. Thus, this knowledge or awareness can be used to design materials for language learning. Materials that are designed based on the description of preferable language learning strategies of these students may help the students to improve their English.

1.6 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

1.6.1 *Language learning strategies:* specific actions or techniques that students use often intentionally to improve their progress in developing second language skills (Oxford, 1990). In this study, English is the target language. There are two major classes in the system of language learning strategies: Direct and Indirect strategies. Direct strategies involve direct learning and use of the subject matter while Indirect strategies contribute indirectly but powerfully to learning. Memory, Cognitive, and Compensation strategies are grouped under Direct strategies. Metacognitive, Affective, and Social strategies are under Indirect strategies.